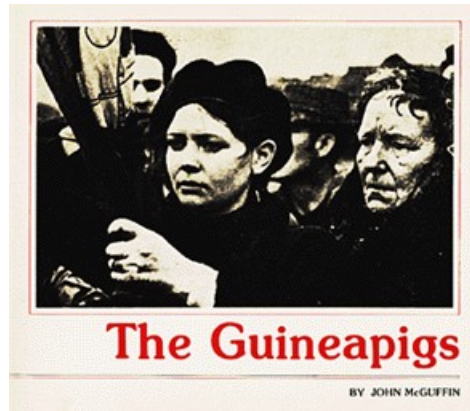


‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)



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by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

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The first edition by Penguin sold 20,000 copies and was banned after one week by the British government and Reginald Maudling. The 2nd edition in 1981 updated the fate of the victims and named the torturers, but omitted two chapters from the original edition.

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From the back cover (2nd edition):

The Guineapigs in the title were fourteen Irish political prisoners on whom the British Army experimented with sensory deprivation torture in 1971. These 'techniques' are now outlawed, following Britain's conviction at the International Court of Human Rights at Strasbourg, but have been exported and used by Britain's allies throughout the world. This book first appeared in 1974, published by Penguin Books in London. It sold out on its first print run and was then abruptly taken off the market following pressure from the British Government.

In Ireland in 1971 there was deliberate and careful use of modern torture techniques, not merely to get information but to perfect the system of Sensory Deprivation for use against civilians. The author, an ex-internee himself spent two years researching the book following his release from Crumlin Road jail where he had been held without charge or trial. In this new edition he is at last able to name the torturers and those responsible for this sordid episode in British Imperial history. No member of the British Army or the Royal

Ulster Constabulary has ever been convicted of torture or brutality to prisoners, although the Government has been forced to pay out over \$5 million in compensation to torture victims.

This re-issue of 'The Guineapigs' is dedicated to the blanket men in Long Kesh concentration camp and the women political prisoners in Armagh jail. **'Na reabhlóidí Abu.'**

Acknowledgements

This book could not have been written without the active help and advice of many people. Firstly I must thank the 'guineapigs' themselves, and in particular Jim Auld, Pat Shivers and Paddy Joe Mc Clean. A large debt is also owed to the Association for Legal Justice, Amnesty International (and in particular Richard Reoch) and the British Society for Social Responsibility in the Sciences. For help on the medical and psychological aspects of SD I am particularly indebted to Dr. Tim Shallice of the National Hospital and Dr. Pearse O'Malley of Belfast.

As for the rest, many have preferred that they remain anonymous, but special thanks must go to Judy Smith, Frank Doherty, Johnathan Rosenhead, Kevin Boyle, Hurst Hannum, Father Denis Faul, Margaret Gatt, Ian Franklin, Eamonn Kerr, Billy Close, Joe Quigley, Noelle, Hugh, Judith and, of course, R. W. Grimshaw. I am grateful to Gil Boehringer for permission to use part of his work for Appendix I.

Finally, I must thank Marie for her typing and Fra for putting up with it all.

JOHN McGUFFIN

Belfast, February 1974

Preface

Torture and brutality – or 'ill-treatment' as Sir Edmund Compton would prefer to call it – are as old as war itself. Mankind has expended centuries of research in trying to devise newer and more bestial ways of extracting information from reluctant witnesses or causing lingering and painful deaths.

The purpose of this book, however, is not to deal with torture in general. It is specific. It deals with the treatment meted out to fourteen Irishmen by the British 'security forces' in the period from August to October 1971. It is not written to show that this treatment was more barbaric than that practised by the British Army upon hundreds of other Irish internees/ detainees/ political prisoners since 1969 nor upon the victims of the ten colonial actions undertaken by the British since the Second World War. Instead it is an attempt to show how these men were selected as unwilling and unwitting subjects upon whom Army psychiatrists, psychologists and 'counter-terrorist strategists' could experiment in that particular field known as 'SD' – Sensory Deprivation. That the experiment was a dismal failure, both from a military and a propaganda point of view, mattered little to the men in the War Office. Worse still, the fact that several of the men used were literally driven out of their minds and still today, over two years later, suffer from severe mental traumas which they will carry with them to the grave has evoked not a shred of remorse, admission of guilt, or apology, let alone an attempt at recompense – though how do you give a man back his mental health? – from the 'mother of parliaments'. This book is an attempt to tell these men's story, the story of the 'guineapigs'.

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Chapter 1

'Ill-Treatment' — A Brief History

It appears that the first recorded instance in English legal history of the use of torture to induce confession was in 1310 when, at the instigation of Pope Clement V, the Templars were tortured by Royal Warrant. Walter of Hemmingford reports that at that time 'torture was unknown in England and that no torturer was to be found in the realm'.^[1] The English soon remedied this deplorable oversight and torture became something of a 'growth industry'. The Irish, however, seem in their usual awkward way to have been lagging behind in this field. Torture was not recognized by Irish Statute or Common Law.

Torture to obtain 'confessions' raged unabated throughout Europe until the late seventeenth century (the Spanish Inquisition was finally abolished in 1809), and many learned tomes were written by earnest scholars and clerics on how to extract 'confessions' from the recalcitrant, chief among these being the awesome *Malleus Malificarum* of Sprenger and Kramer, first published in 1486. This massive treatise on demonology and witchcraft contains full instructions on torture and interrogation methods. It was not the only authority: there was the *Directorium* of Eymeric, the Grand Inquisitor of Aragon, with its five 'steps' of preparation before the actual torture, and of course Torquemada's *Articles of the Inquisition*.^[2]

By the twentieth century requirements had changed. Whereas in the past the State could take its time in breaking a man down, in the modern era speed was of the essence. Moreover, newer and more sophisticated methods were needed as more and more 'intelligence forces' recognized the truth of what Justinian had said in his great *Digest* nearly 2,000 years before.

Torture is untrustworthy, perilous and deceptive. For most men, by patience or the severity of the torture, come so to despise torture that the truth cannot be elicited from them, others are so impatient that they Will lie in any direction rather than suffer torture, so it happens that they depose to contradictions and accuse not only themselves but others.

The Russians seem to have been the first seriously to go into modern interrogatory techniques scientifically. Pavlov's experiments on dogs seem largely to have been ignored by the NKVD, despite claims to the contrary, but by the mid-nineteen-thirties, under the increasingly nightmarish regime of Stalin and with the almost unlimited resources of the Russian people to practise upon, they had evolved new forms of torture, pride of place amongst which went to what is now called SD. The torture had two distinct purposes. Firstly, to extract genuine information and confessions from political enemies and, secondly, to procure public confessions and conversions. This was the decade of the 'show trial' when internationally known and dedicated Bolsheviks such as Zinoviev, Bukharin, Rykov, Radek and Kamenev, as well as unknown technicians, could be made to appear in public and confess to treason, heresy, sabotage and a host of sins, recant in front of the world's press and be formally executed. (That some of the confessions were totally ludicrous seems not to have mattered, Stalin apparently being content to follow Goebbels's theories about 'the Big Lie'. For example one man pleaded guilty along with a host of other scientists to plotting to create artificial volcanoes which at a given signal would erupt and destroy large areas of the Motherland.) Indeed, by 1937 it had become apparent to most in the Russian Politburo that the whole process had got drastically out of hand; but by then it was too late.

Article 128 of the Code of Criminal Procedure of the RSFSR laid down that a prisoner must be charged

within forty-eight hours of arrest. This hadn't hindered the Cheka, nor did it worry the NKVD. In order to break a person down stress is necessary (see Chapter 2), and so Russian political prisoners were kept in abominable conditions, not out of indifference, callousness or old-fashion sadism, but as a deliberate move in the policy of 'softening them up'. Thus solitary confinement in the dark for up to forty days was common. In the infamous 'Kennel' at Lubianka prison sixty men were packed into a heated basement fifteen feet square with no ventilation other than a slit under the door. Disease was, not surprisingly, rife.^[3] Sleep was denied the prisoner in a number of ways – overcrowding, glaring white lights, constant noise, beatings, etc. This was usually the preliminary before the long interrogation, the 'Yezhov Method'.

This could go on for up to two and a half years, though generally it lasted four or five months. Inadequate sleep, freezing cold cells, insufficient food, with the concomitant possibilities of scurvy and other debilitating diseases, all weakened the prisoner. Interrogation generally took place at night. The prisoner would be allowed to drop off to sleep but after fifteen minutes he would be brusquely awoken and dragged in his befuddled state before his interrogators. The Pole Stypulkowski, who was interrogated for hours on end on over 130 separate occasions, described the journey from the cell:

This journey was itself menacing. Everything contributed to make it so; the hands bent to the back, the gloomy behaviour of the silent guard, the dark empty corridors, the wire netting on the staircase, the rhythm of the movements and the echo of smacking lips. It stimulated imagination as to what would happen to me in a few minutes' time. Where were they taking me, and what for? The staging played an important part in the methods of inquest which were applied to me. It remained suggestive until the last day, although, after many migrations of this kind, I knew, like a well-broken horse, where I should have to turn my face to the wall, and whether the guards gripped my right or left arm.^[4]

Interrogations were deliberately boring and repetitive. Interrogators would scream the same questions over and over again, for hours. The prisoner's past was meticulously gone over in infuriatingly minute detail in order to find 'pressure points'. The more confused the prisoner became the more confident his torturer became. Long questionnaires had to be filled in, then were torn up and the process began again. Sleep was always denied when possible. The prisoner's memory was constantly being tested. As he became more confused, so he became more open to suggestion, for the 'Yezhov Method' gave the job of constructing a 'confession' to the prisoner himself. Only after months of this would other 'more experienced' prisoners be allowed to help him formulate 'the correct' statement of confession.

Sessions usually commenced with the time-honoured formula – it was used by the Holy Inquisition and is still used by the British Army today – 'Why do you think you've been brought here? What crimes have you committed? If you were innocent you wouldn't be here!'

The other main method used by the NKVD was known as the 'Conveyor'. This consisted of continual questioning by relays of interrogators for literally days on end. Weissberg, who underwent many forms of torture, claims that it is as painful after three days as any other physical torture.^[5] Anton Ekart claims that a week of it would break anyone.^[6] However, Weissberg gives a vivid account of a veteran 55-year-old anarchist named Eisenberg who, on being called a counter-revolutionary by his interrogators, stolidly refused to utter a single word. Beatings were of no avail, and after an incredible thirty-one days on the Conveyor his interrogators gave up, probably more exhausted and shattered than their silent prisoner.^[7]

In his account of his interrogation Weissberg describes one interrogator, Shalit by name:

He hated the prisoners because they resisted him and were not prepared to admit at once what he wanted them to admit. He was capable of bawling exactly the same question for six hours on end without the slightest variation and without showing any signs of fatigue ... He repeated exactly the same question in exactly the same loud voice and with exactly the same gestures hundreds – no, I really believe thousands – of times ... I often asked myself whether Shalit was utterly stupid. Couldn't he think of anything different to say? ... Gradually I came to the conclusion that he wasn't stupid ... All he could do was to try and exhaust his prisoners physically, and he used this technique with more determination and iron logic than any other examiner I have ever met. From the CPU point of view he was right.

Describing the latter stages of the Conveyor Weissberg says:

My eyes were two balls of pain in a head that felt as if it would split open but for the iron band being drawn tighter and tighter around it. For four hours Shalit repeated his favourite question ... When Weissbrand relieved him at eight o'clock in the morning. I was almost unconscious ... I was not taken down for my food until nine o'clock. Lavatory, wash and the meal had to be over in ten minutes and then I was taken back to the Conveyor'.

After over 140 hours of this:

Red rings whirled before my eyes and my brain no longer functioned. The room began to swim. The pain was worse than ever before and seemed to extend over my whole body ... But I managed to hold out till Weissbrand relieved Shalit in the evening ... It was midnight on the seventh day of my 'Conveyor'. I had fought till I dropped but now I was beaten. There was nothing left for me but capitulation and 'confession'.^[8]

Weissberg subsequently withdrew his 'confession', underwent the Conveyor again, 'confessed' and again repudiated his 'confession'.

Of course, immediately a confession began the whole pattern changed. A 'friendly' examiner was wheeled in. Food and cigarettes would appear like magic. Some prisoners recount crying with joy and their examiners crying with them. It was much the same catharsis as that experienced by the inquisitors who had just saved another soul from Hell – and consigned his body over to the executioner.

The Conveyor was not in itself completely new, of course – there are reports of similar methods being used on Scottish witches in the seventeenth century, for example – but under the reign of 'comrades' Yezhov and Vyshinsky it was refined to a high art. Unfortunately for the 'comrades', both of whom were soon to be purged themselves, the initial high success rate didn't last very long. Usually within three days 'confessions' were retracted. Generally they weren't worth the paper they were written on. It is not too difficult to turn a prisoner into a zombie, it is much more difficult to 'brainwash' him to stay that way. This was a technique that the Chinese and the Koreans were to improve upon after the Second World War.

Another major defect of the Conveyor was that it frequently drove the examiners themselves out of their minds. By 1937 the entire Russian secret police had become a self-perpetuating, insane bureaucracy involving thousands and thousands of secret police in pointless formality. All were only too aware that their turn to be purged or 'liquidated' might come at any moment – this in turn tended to improve prisoners' morale. 'Beck' and 'Godin' were proud of 'outlasting ten examining magistrates', for example.^[9] As Sartre has said, 'whether the victim talks or whether he dies under his agony, the secret that he cannot tell is always somewhere else and out of reach. It is the executioner who becomes Sisyphus. If he puts the question at all, he will have to continue forever.'^[10]

Stalin wanted confessions not merely to kill his possible rivals but for the purpose of turning them into scapegoats for Russia's failures. If the old-guard Bolsheviks could be made to discredit themselves publicly and take upon their shoulders the blame for the country's shortcomings he, Stalin, the man of steel, could be seen head and shoulders above the rest as the incorruptible, the Saviour. In the event, the Conveyor method was, in August 1937, deemed to have served its purpose. The secret police returned to the more traditional boot and fist methods of the Cheka. Yezhov was himself 'liquidated' by Beria early next year.

But just because more primitive methods were encouraged, this did not mean that the Russians weren't doing research into interrogation techniques. The 'Stoika' was frequently used. (As those detained by the British Army know to their cost, this consists of being made to lean against a wall on tiptoes and supported only by your fingertips for hours on end.) Kravchenko claims that sustained use of this method can break most people.^[11] There was also the 'Swallow', where the victim has his hands and feet tied together behind his back and is hoisted up into the air.

And there was always humiliation. This was a standard technique and is still much in use with the British

Army. Prisoners were spat on, urinated upon, forced to do menial and revolting tasks, like licking toilet bowls – all practices used in Girdwood Barracks in 1971 – forced to wear loose and shapeless clothing, for example oversize trousers with no belt, necessitating that the prisoner shuffle around holding his trousers up all day, the belt having ostensibly been taken away to prevent the possibility of suicide. Similarly people have their heads shaven in the holy name of hygiene but in reality to humiliate and degrade them. Refusal to allow prisoners toilet facilities so that they have to piss and crap in their trousers is another standard ploy – again, as is admitted in the Compton Report, this was done to one of the 'guineapigs', Paddy Joe McClean. Abusive language is another common tactic, firstly to humiliate the defenceless prisoner, but secondly to reassure his guard or torturer into believing that his charge is in some way subhuman. Similarly, it is insisted that the prisoner call his tormentor 'Sir' throughout and that he thank him for every blow, threat or insult. In addition to these techniques there are the old ones of the use of 'stool pigeons', concealed microphones, bribery, threats of reprisals upon the prisoner's family, etc., and all of these were used by the Russians. Nonetheless, by August 1937 it would seem that their experiments into the use of SD were curtailed for the time being. (Instead, in a secret telegram dated 1939, Stalin authorized 'more physical pressure' since 'it is known that all bourgeois intelligence services use methods of physical influence against the representatives of the Socialist proletariat ... Why should the Soviet Intelligence be more humanitarian against the mad agents of the bourgeoisie?')^[12]

The Second World War saw little attempt by the Allies to make use of these 'advances' in interrogatory techniques. According to Sir Robert Thompson the British government regarded torture as 'ineffective'. 'A suspect can be interrogated on the basis of a mass of information already available to the intelligence organization. This shocks the truth out of him far more effectively than torture.'^[13] The commandant of Britain's interrogation centre in the Second World War agrees. In a letter to *The Times* Mr. L. St. Clare Grondona stated that the methods used upon German POWs were 'processes of painless extraction seasoned with legitimate guile ... It is the simple truth to say that if one of our interrogator had suggested submitting any prisoner to *any* form of physical duress (which would certainly not have been permitted) he would have been a laughing stock among his colleagues.'^[14] There is no reason to doubt that this was true of the 1939-45 period. Certainly the memoirs of German POWs in England contain no allegations of torture or even 'ill-treatment' – although, of course, some were shot 'while trying to escape'. Britain had not used, and did not appear to be about to use, the methods of the NKVD.

Korea was to change all this. It is from the time of the Korean conflict that the phrase 'brainwashing' gained popular currency. The Chinese and Koreans, eager to convert American and British POWs to Communism, began to experiment on ways to achieve this through psychological manipulation. This is not the place to give a lengthy explanation of how 'brainwashing' works or doesn't work; suffice it to say that in order to convert an unwilling person to an ideology it is first necessary to induce some degree of nervous tension or to arouse sufficient anxiety or rage to secure the person's attention. As William Sargant puts it:

By increasing or prolonging stresses in various ways, or inducing physical debilitation, a more thorough alteration of the person's thinking processes may be achieved. The immediate effect of such treatment is, usually, to impair judgement and increase suggestibility; and though when tension is removed the suggestibility likewise diminishes, yet ideas implanted while it lasted may remain. If the stress or the physical debilitation, or both, are carried one stage further, it may happen that patterns of thought and behaviour, especially those of recent acquisition, become disrupted. New patterns can then be substituted, or suppressed patterns allowed to re-assert themselves; or the subject may begin to think and act in ways that precisely contradict his former ones.^[15]

However, the Chinese did not have a great deal of success with the POWs. Language and cultural difficulties were hard to overcome and the techniques used were, by and large, fairly primitive. Nonetheless, enough was achieved to worry the Allies. A Ministry of Defence publication quoted by Sargant claims that Chinese

brainwashing had little or no effect 'on senior British officers' (presumably Sandhurst had got in first with their own form of brainwashing) but that 'some of the more impressionable junior NCOs and privates were affected'.^[16] They admit to some forty 'converts'. The Communists claim many more, of course, and the truth probably lies in between.^[17]

One of the British Army officers whom the Chinese tried unsuccessfully to brainwash has written his memoirs on the subject. He was then Capt. Tony Farrar-Hockley of the Glosters and his jolly schoolboyish account contains some remarkable ironies:

They were not unfriendly. That is to say they did not maltreat us. It never occurred to us, of course, that they *would* maltreat us – much less kill us. After all, this was the mid-twentieth century and we had every right to expect to be treated as human beings by troops of a nation constantly proclaiming its humanitarianism.^[18]

My mind could not conceive the truth that my senses offered ... I knew that I was in a torture chamber. Yet my mind could not conceive it. I was living in the twentieth century – the year nineteen hundred and fifty-one. Surely these men would never bring themselves to torture me in cold blood. Looking around at their faces, I saw neither passion nor compassion in any one of them!^[19]

Farrar-Hockley then goes on to claim that he was subjected to the water torture, much beloved by Britain's ally France, and hitherto by the Holy Inquisition, and there appears to be no reason to doubt him; presumably, however, Sir Edmund Compton would have acquitted his tormentors of any charges of torture since they do not appear to have derived sufficient pleasure out of the whole business. Frequently throughout the book, Farrar-Hockley invokes the Geneva Convention. In a foreword commending the book Maj.-Gen. T. Brodie (CB, CBE, DSO, etc.) tells us that it is the story of 'gallant officers who fought not only in battle but in captivity under appalling conditions and against inhuman captors'.

That British and American officers and men, including Capt. Farrar-Hockley, were badly treated and in some cases tortured by the Koreans and Chinese is not denied. Clearly the Chinese had scant regard for the niceties of the Geneva Convention. However, some twenty years later Farrar-Hockley, as Commander of Land Forces in Northern Ireland until he left in September 1971, must surely have been perturbed by the persistent allegations of disgraceful behaviour by British troops during such incidents as the illegal curfew of the Lower Falls,^[20] and by the existence of 'interrogation' centres such as that at Palace barracks. If so, however, he has remained silent. Moreover, as will be shown, the treatment meted out to the 'guineapigs' was far worse than any given to the 978 British POWs in Korea by what Maj.-Gen. Brodie deems 'their inhuman captors'. And when the Geneva Convention was invoked by the author when he was being illegally held in Girdwood Barracks in August 1971 his interrogators laughed. 'Nobody here gives a shit for that scrap of paper,' he was told.

The Chinese experiments into brainwashing may have been fairly primitive but they were enough to worry the Americans at least. As early as 1953 they were claiming that 'the methods of Pavlov' were being used to try to get GIs to confess to using poison gas against the Korean people. As the prisoners were released and returned home some of them were still 'infected with the virus of Communism' and were hastily shipped off to army camps to be 'debriefed' – and studied.

There it was found that of the seventy-eight airmen accused of carrying out bacteriological warfare missions thirty-eight had 'confessed'.^[21] (Eugene Kinkead in *Why They Collaborated*, Longmans, 1960, gives the figure as thirty-eight out of fifty-nine.) This was accomplished by the Chinese and Koreans partly through brutality and poor camp conditions but also through intensive interrogatory techniques. When fatigue, despair or confusion elicited a partial and halfhearted 'confession' the prisoner, who was at this stage generally sullen and basically unconvinced of his 'crime', was put into a cell with about seven other 'confessed war criminals'. The usual process of 'self-criticism' was continued, as was the continual rewriting of his 'autobiography'. Each time the prisoner returned to his cell after a further interrogation his cell-mates would surround him and with evangelical fervour 'struggle to help him with his confession' by shouting at him, reviling him and

accusing both themselves and the prisoner of unspeakable crimes. Man is a social animal and the strain of such lengthy and monotonous sessions was often enough to make a man crack. Bewildered, anxious, weak and confused, he was left with no privacy, no shell into which he might withdraw. Nothing in his past life was left sacrosanct. Degraded to the point of collapse, he had only one straw to grasp at – the acceptance of the basic 'decency' of Communism, which was often portrayed to him initially as 'early Christianity'.

Following the catharsis of the 'conversion' the 'educational' process was accelerated. Up to fifty-six hours a week of ideological lectures, more self-criticism and of course better living accommodation, food and medical care. For, unlike the Russians who could and generally did dispose of their 'brainwashed' victims after they had served their purpose at the show trial, the Chinese, with true evangelical zeal, really did desire to 'save' the POW from Imperialism and receive him into the Communist fold. They wanted permanent conversions.

But with American as with British POWs, they had little real success. The North Koreans had been ill-equipped to deal with the POWs and there was a serious lack of English-speaking interrogators. Moreover, their lecturers tended to have little or no knowledge of what conditions were like in the US, and this tended adversely to affect their credibility. Of those subjected to the 'brainwashing process' Hinkle and Wolff, who were 'consultants to the US Department of Defence' state:

Statistical correlations made by research groups of the US Air Force indicate that resistance did not correlate with rank, education, religion, geographical area of origin, length of service or regular or reserve status. The information from our own studies suggests very strongly that resistance or non-resistance is related to highly personal factors involving motivations, value systems, character structure and circumstances of imprisonment.^[22]

Hardly very valuable conclusions for their military masters, for the caveat must be made that Messrs Hinkle and Wolff cannot be taken as impartial scientific investigators. Witness their bland statement that when the American POWs returned home and 'began to read back-copies of popular magazines and papers they began to compare what had been told them by the Koreans *with the facts as observed and reported in the US press*,' (my italics). Hinkle and Wolff also appear to be totally unaware that such a phenomenon as American Imperialism actually does exist – a severe mental block on their parts.

But China was not the only Communist country to be experimenting with SD techniques. The Russian secret police had not forgotten the lessons of the thirties, and with increasing numbers of 'recalcitrant elements' in the new satellite countries of Eastern Europe to deal with they began again to resort to these experimental methods. One of the most bizarre accounts of the treatment is given by the Hungarian Lajo Ruff who was arrested in Budapest in 1951 and jailed for several years. The treatment accorded to him seems to have been designed to induce an artificial state of schizophrenia. He was constantly drugged, both with narcotics and hallucinogens. Frequently he would awaken from a drugged sleep to be told by apparently concerned and solicitous examiners that he had tried to commit suicide. Looking down he could see and feel the razor marks on his wrists or feel the bruises around his neck. A 'spontaneous search of his cell would reveal a hidden razor-blade or necktie in his mattress. Reality and fantasy were constantly blurred. He was shown pornographic films for example where the 'leading man', whose face he never could quite see, bore a striking resemblance to himself. He would awake briefly to discover the blonde from the film in his bed, fall asleep again and awake only to discover that his hand was cut and his shoes muddy, fitting in with what he remembered of the 'hero's' activities from the porno movie. Ruff does not appear to have been that important an 'enemy of the State' and for the secret police to have expended so much time, money and effort indicated that he was used primarily as a guineapig. Many of his friends and acquaintances were driven insane during their interrogations at this time and Ruff only escaped in the end by feigning insanity.^[23]

*

Britain continued to take part in colonial campaigns – no fewer than ten of them from 1945 to 1971. There

were four main areas – Malaya (1948-60), Kenya (1952-6), Cyprus (1955-9) and Aden (1963-7). It is instructive briefly to look at the development of British interrogation methods during these four campaigns.

Firstly Malaya. This is the only area where the British can lay claim to a 'victory'. The Communist guerrillas were defeated, and Britain was able to make the transition from overt colonialism to the much less expensive and much more profitable neo-colonialism. The 'victory' nonetheless was expensive. The 'security force' admit to 1,865 killed and 2,560 wounded (though of these only 506 killed were actually British soldiers) and official figures give the civilian casualties as 2,473 killed, 1,385 wounded and 810 missing, presumed dead. But the Communists were contained and then defeated despite the cost, and the methods used are interesting. Most of the credit for their defeat has been given to Robert Thompson who rose to be Secretary for Defence in Malaya until 1961 when he headed the British Advisory Mission to Vietnam and received his knighthood.^[24]

He developed a policy of massive resettlement of Chinese workers (over 600,000 were moved) into what the Americans in Vietnam were euphemistically to call 'strategic hamlets' and the local people 'concentration camps', extensive deportation to China, internment – under Regulation 17D 29,828 people were interned without trial during 'the emergency' – as well as a wide-ranging set of special powers; these methods all contributed to the defeat of the Communists. But it is interesting to note that the British did not resort to torture, nor even much brutality – the occasional atrocity such as the Batang Kali massacre when men of the Second Battalion of the Scots Guards shot down unarmed villagers (11 December 1948) definitely seems to have been an isolated, unauthorized 'incident' – (it was nevertheless hushed up). Instead of trying to torture prisoners to obtain information the British adopted the unorthodox, but highly productive, method of bribery. That this was effective is conclusively proven by the fact that leading Communist guerrillas such as Lam Swee, Osman China and Hor Lung were all persuaded to surrender with their groups in this manner. Rewards were, by local standards, enormous – Hor Lung for example got \$120,000 and a complete pardon. In May 1952 the price on Communist leader Chin Peng's head was \$250,000 and the price-scale ranged down to \$2,500 for an ordinary 'private'. This may have been expensive and raised a few hackles from the local 'Pukka Sahibs', but it was certainly more beneficial to the British than the lunatic schemes of men like General Templer who wanted collective fines and twenty-two-hour curfews.

And so, by 1961 when the 'emergency' was officially declared to be at an end, Britain had succeeded in countering the Communist threat without having to resort to torture. At the same time, however, her record was by no means as untarnished elsewhere.

In Kenya the Mau Mau were not motivated by fanatical Communism, but they were bound together by strong traditional tribal loyalties and oaths. Robert Graves, for instance, reports how he had heard Mau Mau men condemned to be executed the next morning, laughing, joking and singing all night in the hut.^[25] The Mau Mau may have been brutal – though judging by the very small numbers of white casualties their threat seems to have been exaggerated – but as John Stonehouse MP has pointed out, the movement could never have arisen or gained such a hold on the Kikuyu if the Kenyans had been allowed some legitimate outlet for their very real grievances' over land reforms and political representation.^[26] The British response was barbaric. Over 80,000 men and women were rounded up and the vast majority were interned without charge or trial in truly appalling conditions. Even after seven years, over 7,000 men were still interned. The worst of the excesses were justified under the infamous 'Cowan Plan' whereby uncharged and untried prisoners were forced to work scraping soil with their bare hands in temperatures of 120° F, while sadistic guards brutalized and beat them. The *raison d'être* for this was given by the English Secretary of State for Defence Lennox-Boyd after the murder of eleven men in Hola camp. Speaking on 3 March 1959 he told his fellow MPs: 'Experience has shown, time after time, that unless hard-core detainees can be got to start working, their rehabilitation is impossible. Once they have started working there is a psychological breakthrough and

astonishing results are then achieved.' Sydney Silverman then intervened to ask: 'Who told the Right Honourable Member that? Stalin?'"^[27]

Duncan McPherson, Kenyan Assistant Commissioner of Police, in charge of the CID, claimed however that

hundreds of these men and women were just listed and detained on the whim of various clerks with no authority at all ... All seemed well, provided a 10 per cent quota was returned for detention ... I would say that the conditions I found existing in some camps in Kenya were worse, far worse, than anything I experienced in my four and a half years as a prisoner of the Japanese.^[28]

But there was little or no outcry about the conditions in Kenya – after all, weren't the victims black?, and the press had constantly 'blackened' the Mau Mau's image. Not only were the murderers at Hola Camp exonerated, but Her Royal Highness Queen Elizabeth II saw fit to award Mr. J. B. T. Cowan, author of the 'Cowan Plan', the MBE in the June Honours List for 1959.

Interrogation methods in Kenya seem to have been primitive. The boot, the baton, the fist, all were common. On several occasions prisoners were actually beaten to death – according to Barbara Castle MP, for example, Samuel Githu, a warder at Aguthi camp, beat a detainee to death in September 1958, with the apparent approval of his superiors.^[29] In the same camp, which was one of the more notorious ones, a detainee was given twelve strokes of the cane for the heinous offence of daring to write a letter to an MP. Mr. Paul Williams, MP for Sunderland South, approved, calling it 'a perfectly natural punishment for the crime'.^[30] Transgressing warders did not always escape reprobation, however – a chief inspector was actually fined \$60 and a former district officer \$24 for causing actual bodily harm to a Kikuyu prisoner, and two European officers who beat Kamau Kichina so badly that he died from the injuries even got eighteen months! Brutality there was aplenty, but few examples of torture to obtain information and certainly no signs as yet of SD-type experiments, contrary to the assertions of the Parker Commission.^[31]

Cyprus was a rather different matter. Here, too, the police were nominally responsible for the interrogations, but the Army, increasingly exasperated at their inability to capture Grivas or smash EOKA, eventually took over completely when Maj.-Gen. Kenneth Darling was appointed as Director of Anti-Terrorist Operations in October 1958. But by then the crisis was almost over. There were sporadic examples of the troops 'disgracing themselves', as the British press reluctantly put it – such as the incident on 3 October 1958 in the streets of Famagusta when they used such force in rounding up over 2,000 Cypriot civilians that at least 200 were taken to hospital; needless to say, no one was reprimanded officially for this 'excess of zeal'. Had an inquiry been held in any case, it is hard to believe that it would have been any less of a 'whitewash' than that which exonerated the men of the Royal Horse Guards who had taken a number of Greek Cypriot detainees just released from custody to the Turkish Cypriot village of Gunyeli and handed them over to the tender mercies of the local villagers. Several were killed. (This was a practice used later in Aden and also in sectarian Belfast.)

The most serious allegations against the British concerned detainees. In 1957 these culminated with Britain being taken to the 'dock' of the Council of Europe at Strasbourg and in front of the UN by Greece. Forty-nine cases of torture were alleged, and it took some sordid behind-doors dealing between the British and the Greeks before the cases were dropped – no one consulted the Cypriots about it, of course. But in Cyprus itself the torture allegations became so numerous that eventually something had to be done. Members of the conservative Cyprus Bar Association set up a Human Rights Committee to investigate some of the allegations and by December 1956 had submitted fifty-seven complaints to the Cyprus government. Reluctantly, the British disciplined four men – a police superintendent convicted of assault was bound over, an assistant superintendent was fined \$60, a PC was given an absolute discharge for assault and an auxiliary

PC got three years for shooting and wounding two Cypriots.^[32] Soon, however, Archbishop Makarios produced a further list of 317 cases where it was alleged that torture had been used, and two men had died under torture.

Undoubtedly allegations regarding torture can be, and at times are, exaggerated. But not all that much. Field-Marshal Harding must have been very naive if he seriously expected Cypriots to be convinced by his concluding paragraphs in the Cyprus White Paper:

If the price of immediately clearing the security forces of these allegations is to impair their ability to deal effectively with fresh outbreaks of terrorism and to gain information which will assist them in protecting the public from murder, violence and brutality, then the security forces will continue to place their duty first. They will be content that one day they will be vindicated. Meanwhile Her Majesty's Armed Forces and the police in Cyprus will rely on the world-wide knowledge of their traditions of humanity and decency to convince the public of the free world of the falsity of the allegations which emanate from men who have no scruples in aiding and abetting murder.

Such slobber would not disgrace Sir Edmund Compton. It had the effect of giving the 'interrogation squad' *carte blanche*.

In fact the torture used during interrogations in Cyprus was almost all physical rather than mental, and of little or no practical use. Despite the fact that Cyprus is only a small island Grivas was never captured and EOKA, a very small group with few arms, was not smashed.^[33] EOKA also claims that in addition to physical beatings (in one isolated incident a captain of the Intelligence Corps and an acting captain in the Gordon Highlanders were cashiered for beating detainee Christos Constantinou with an iron chain^[34]) men were forced to stand on nails, sit for hours on blocks of ice or were given narcotics. If this is true, the views of Peter Hamilton, the security adviser to the British government, may not be far from the mark.^[35] He claims that one of the main reasons for British Intelligence's lack of success was that many of the interrogators had a lot of sympathy for the Cypriots, who 'were very close to us'. 'My heart wasn't in it,' he adds – an inhibition which certainly was not to hinder later British interrogators in Aden and Ireland.

Interrogation methods in Cyprus were still rudimentary, but a pattern was emerging which was to develop even more strongly during the British Army's next major conflict – Aden.

Against the wishes of a large majority of her people, in February 1963 Aden was incorporated into the Federation of South Arabia for the better protection of British oil interests. For the next four years Britain had another guerrilla war on her hands, this time mainly urban guerrilla war. Wholesale arrests and internment soon produced enough suspects for the interrogation teams to get to work on. The usual brutality, made worse by the innate racism of the average British soldier, further alienated the Adenis, and 'Cyprus-like' incidents such as when detainees were handed over to a neighbouring Sultan to be tortured and kept in abominable conditions for sixty-two days didn't help. But it was the infamous Fort Morbut 'interrogation centre' which aroused most hostility amongst the Adeni population.

As guerrillas had done in Malaya, Cyprus and Algeria the NLF and FLOSY, the two main guerrilla groups, concentrated initially on eliminating the Adeni Special Branch, whose local knowledge they rightly regarded as a threat. This forced the Army more and more into the role of 'intelligence gathering' and in the summer of 1965 the torture HQ at Fort Morbut was set up. Torture complaints soon poured in. In 1964 the International Red Cross had been refused permission to visit Aden. In the next year they were grudgingly allowed in but refused permission to see any of the detainees.

Meanwhile Amnesty International was trying to investigate the torture allegations made to them by the Civil Service Association of South Arabia. In the summer of 1966 Dr. Salahaddin Rastgeldi, a Swede, travelled to Aden to attempt to determine whether there was any truth in the serious allegations made. Rastgeldi was to suffer the traditional British 'cold-shoulder' treatment from the authorities. They refused to let him investigate or to interview any of the 164 detainees whose names and dates of arrest he had. The High

Commissioner, Sir Richard Tumbull, informed him with polished casuistry that there were 'no political detainees in Aden'. According to Rastgeldi, 'I produced the list of 164 names and asked if all, without exception, were terrorists?' 'How can we know? We cannot produce any evidence against them,' the Commissioner replied. Reporting back to Amnesty, Rastgeldi stated that he had convincing proof that many innocent people had been arrested since the declaration of the emergency and that their cases hadn't been brought to court. 'But, he added, 'this is not in contradiction to the British constitutional laws. Once a state of emergency is established for a certain area ... no application can be made to any higher order of justice in favour of the detainees.' He went on to point out that the UN itself had condemned the idea of 'states of emergency', so beloved by Britain for her troublesome colonies. (The emergency laws provided that whenever the High Commissioner or Governor was satisfied that for the purpose of maintaining public order it was necessary to exercise control over any person, a detention order could be made against that person. In detention suspects could be held indefinitely, subject to a periodic review by a special tribunal. For interrogation purposes a suspect was only supposed to be held for twenty-eight days.) As Rastgeldi pointed out, such 'states of emergency' are in flagrant contravention of the UN Declaration of Human Rights.

It is instructive to examine the tortures alleged against the interrogators in Fort Morbut and Waterloo interrogation camps, for they show an increasing use of techniques allied to SD, though still only in rudimentary stage. Ten main allegations of torture were made:

1. Undressing detainees and making them stand naked during interrogation;
2. keeping them undressed in very cold cells with air conditioners and fans running at full speed;
3. keeping them awake by constant irritation until they were exhausted;
4. offering food to hungry detainees and then removing it before they could eat it;
5. hitting and twisting their genitals;
6. forcing them to sit on poles directed towards their anuses;
7. extinguishing cigarettes on their bodies;
8. banning visits to toilets so that they had to soil their cells;
9. at other times keeping them in filthy toilets;
10. forcing them to run in circles until they were exhausted.

Rastgeldi gave accounts of interviews with various people who had been through the Fort Morbut process, and they have a ring of truth about them. One example was twenty-five-year-old Hashim Jawee, a local Aden councillor, of whom Rastgeldi said, 'He seemed to be deeply shaken by the interrogation and showed feelings of shame for the humiliating treatment to which he was subjected. There was no doubt about the truth of his description of his arrest and interrogation. Jawee was stripped, thrown into an isolation cell, and left naked for a time before interrogation began. His buttocks and genitals were examined in order to humiliate him; the examiner was not a physician and the examination was not a medical examination. During the first three days the barrel of a gun was pointed at him through the cell window and Jawee was told he was going to be shot within a short time. Although the cell had a temperature of over 100° F. He was not allowed to wash or have a shower. At times he was kicked and had his hair pulled; he was also forced to run around the courtyard until he was exhausted and when he asked for water they spat in his face. At no time was he allowed to see the lawyers and visitors who tried to see him. His elder brother Hussein, who was Chief of Police for the Crater district, was also taken to Fort Morbut and threatened with execution. In another case a law graduate of Hull University, Adel Khalifa, was arrested on the day that he was to have been appointed a magistrate. He was systematically beaten, denied sleep and drink and subjected to psychological tortures, such as being blindfolded and told that a youth in the same room was his younger brother who was going to be shot if he didn't confess to something. The interrogators also told him that they had his wife in the barracks and that she was having 'a nice time' with the soldiers. He also met the mysterious French torturer, fresh from the torture-

chambers of Algeria, whom several other detainees report as having threatened and beaten them.^[36]

The Amnesty report caused a stir, and reluctantly the British government in October 1966 appointed Roderic Bowen QC to 'examine the procedures current in Aden for the arrest, interrogation and detention of persons suspected of terrorist activities and to advise upon any ways in which they might be improved'. Bowen spent only eleven days in Aden and presented his report on 8 November.^[37] He found that there was 'a most regrettable failure to deal expeditiously and adequately with allegations of cruelty'. He admitted that senior British legal advisers had been sending in memoranda concerning torture allegations for some time and urging an inquiry, but that nothing had been done. 'Why should anything be done?' was the Army's reply. Had not the Foreign Secretary, George Brown, claimed in his introduction to the Bowen Report that the Fort Morbut centre had 'operated with considerable success, having provided information leading to the discovery of numerous arms caches and to the arrest of a large number of terrorists', etc. etc.? Armed with this testimonial the Army certainly didn't feel inclined to pay any attention to the complaints of 'bleeding hearts', 'liberals' and 'pinkoes'. And so the memoranda sent by the legal advisers to the Deputy High Commissioner from 18 October to 26 December 1965 were ignored, and it might seem to those of a particularly cynical bent that Bowen made little or no attempt to get at the truth, not considering it to 'be part of my task to investigate in detail any specific allegation'.^[38] He claimed that there had only been three 'bad apples'. Three torturers were spirited away, one of them a 'veteran' of the Cyprus interrogations. The Deputy Superintendent of the Special Branch, sent belatedly to 'investigate', submitted his report but he hadn't even bothered to look at the medical records – a 'surprising' omission when we consider that the Director of Health Services was one of those who had been protesting about ill-treatment of detainees. Following this up, the Director of Army Intelligence refused to allow any of his gallant officers to be identified, let alone charged or tried.

The alleged tortures reveal several interesting developments in interrogation techniques. SD 'auxiliary' treatment appears more consistently than hitherto. Deprivation of sleep and food are cited, and the ploy of causing stress through humiliation is very clearly evident – it should be taken into account that different cultures have different mores and that nakedness implies a lot more 'loss of face' for an Arab than for an Englishman. Similarly the refusal to permit toilet visits and the insanitary conditions were deeply humiliating to most Adenis. As we have seen, these attempts to humiliate the prisoner were standard NKVD practice in the 1930s, and all were to be used in conjunction with overtly SD methods in Northern Ireland in 1971. This time they were used as an experimental test.

There is evidence of one other brief 'dry run' by the Intelligence Unit before the Northern Ireland experiments. In 1967, during the disturbances in Hong Kong, many Hong Kong Chinese were rounded up and interrogated. Here yet another variation was tried. They used the old Russian 'Conveyor' system, teams of interrogators working the prisoner over in relays. There was one important difference, however. Although the prisoners were deprived of sleep as a result of the lengthy interrogations unlike the NKVD, and to the prisoners' surprise, they were not physically beaten or maltreated, nor were threats used.^[39] In the event it seems that this twist in the interrogation process produced little information and it hasn't been used since. It was back to the drawing-board for the Army psychologists, and Northern Ireland was to be the testing-ground.

17 February 1965 had seen the issue of a joint directive to British troops entitled 'Military Interrogation and Internal Security Operations Overseas' (amended on 10 February 1967). Interrogators were piously reminded that 'apart from legal and moral considerations torture and physical cruelty of all kinds are professionally unrewarding'. The following acts were specifically prohibited – '(i) Violence to life and person, in particular mutilation, cruel treatment and torture; (ii) outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment.'

Clearly in Aden this directive had been cynically ignored. Consequently Bowen in his few

recommendations suggested some changes, claimed by *The Times* as 'far-reaching'.^[40] These were: daily inspection of the detainees by a civilian doctor, and replacement of military interrogators by civilians. Few would call these particularly 'far-reaching' but, anyway, both recommendations were ignored on the grounds that they were 'impractical', as were the original provisions of the directive that Denis Healey seemed so proud of. In Northern Ireland people were tortured, and then examined by Army doctors, who, having declared that they were fit to receive more interrogation', certified them as fit and well, despite the obvious and in some cases grotesque injuries they had received. Civilian doctors were not allowed near most detainees and only occasionally could see them on a personal visit basis when they had been removed from the interrogation centres to prison.^[41] Army interrogators still carried out their experiments, 'instructing' the RUC in what exactly to do.

This leaves one interesting question to be answered. In the Parker Report it is claimed that the SD methods used on the Irish guineapigs were

techniques developed since the war to deal with a number of situations involving internal security. *Some or all* have played an important part in counter insurgency operations in Palestine, Malaya, Kenya and Cyprus and more recently in the British Cameroons (1960-61), Brunei (1963), British Guiana (1964), Aden (1964-7), Borneo/ Malaysia (1965-6), and the Persian Gulf (1970-71).^[42]

This appears to be totally inaccurate. Inquiries amongst detainees and those interrogated during these 'emergencies' reveal plenty of allegations of brutality and possibly torture, but very little evidence of specifically SD technique such as hooding, wall-standing, noise, starvation, and no sleep for days on end. Noise and sleep deprivation were used in Aden and in most cases food was certainly in short supply and of poor quality, but SD techniques per se were not generally used, as far as can be ascertained. Cyril Cunningham, senior psychologist for British POW Intelligence from 1951 to 1961 categorically denied that SD techniques had been used and described them as 'singularly stupid and unimaginative'. He added that interrogation backed by fear is a blunt, medieval and extremely inefficient technique, never used in my days'.^[43] While it is unlikely that Mr. Cunningham would admit that his interrogation squads had broken all the rules – and certainly they were guilty of brutality in his day – all the evidence points to the Parker Committee being deliberately misinformed by the 'Army experts' who briefed them and attempted to minimize the insidiousness and illegality of what they were actually doing. Even Lord Gardiner, in his Minority Report, was forced to admit that the tortures carried out were completely illegal but as we shall see this illegality worried neither the Army 'experimenters', the RUC nor Brian Arthur Deane Faulkner, whose signature authorized each special arrest. As for British Army strategists, as we will see, torture, assassinations and bombings were only to be regarded as part and parcel of the Army's weaponry in their daily struggle to subdue and control the civilian population.

Footnotes Chapter 1:

1. see John Swain, *A History of Torture* (Tandem Books, 1965).
L.O. Pile, in his *History of Crime* in England, points out that a license to torture was found in the Pipe Roll of 34 Henry II.
2. see Rafael Sabatini, *Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition* (Stanley Paul, 1924).
3. For an account of this by survivors, see *The Memoirs of R.V. Ivanov-Razumnik* (Oxford University Press, 1965), pp.291-7.
4. Z. Stypulkowski, *Invitation to Moscow* (Thames & Hudson, 1951).
5. Alex Weissberg, *Conspiracy of Silence* (Hamish Hamilton, 1952).
6. Ekart, *Vanished without Trace* (Parrish, 1954).

7. Weissberg, op. cit., pp.386-7.
8. ibid.
9. F. Beck and W. Godin (pseudonyms), *Russian Purges and the Extraction of Confessions* (Hurst & Blackett, 1951).
10. In his introduction to Alleg's *The Question* (Calder, 1958).
11. V. Kravchenko, *I Chose Justice* (Hale, London, 1951), p.169.
12. Quoted by Peter Deeley in *Beyond Breaking Point* (Barker, 1971), p.18.
13. Sir Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency* (Chatto & Windus, 1966), p.87.
14. *The Times*, 27 November 1971.
15. W. Sargant, *Battle for the Mind* (Pan, 1959), p.80.
16. ibid., p.159.
17. It is interesting to note that in all the scientific examinations of brainwashing carried out by the Communists on British and American soldiers, none of the investigators seem to have asked themselves whether one of the factors influencing 'conversion' could be that there was a lot of truth in what the Chinese said with regard to the Allied soldiers' role as mercenaries and cannon-fodder for what they would call 'the forces of Imperialism'.
18. Farrar-Hockley, *The Edge of the Sword* (Muller, London, 1954), p.74.
19. ibid., p.191.
20. see *Law (?) and Orders* (CCDC, Belfast, 1970),' and *Ulster*, by the Sunday Times Insight Team (Penguin, 1972).
21. Whether the US did actually use biological weapons in the Korean War is still in question. What is not questioned is that from at least 1961 the US was secretly storing nerve gas on Okinawa and in South Korea (and West Germany). This was only admitted when twenty-four American soldiers were incapacitated in an accident on Okinawa (see *the New York Times* of 23 July 1969). What is also certain is that the US was prepared to drop nuclear bombs in Indochina at the time of Dien Bien Phu (1954). Given that the US Secretary of State, Dulles, and President Eisenhower were prepared to unleash the holocaust of nuclear genocide, there seems no reason to suppose that scruples about germ warfare would have hampered them. (See confirmation of this from the French Foreign Secretary, Georges Bidault, in Drummond and Coblenz, *Duel at the Brink* (Doubleday, New York, 1960).)
22. American Medical Association *Archive of Neurological Psychiatry*, 76 (1956), pp.115-74, esp. p.169.
23. *The Brainwashing Machine* (Hale, London, 1954).
24. Thompson, having made his name in Malaya, was later employed as a US presidential adviser. However, his policies in Vietnam met with resounding defeat at the hands of the Vietcong. See, for example, Noam Chomsky, *At War in Vietnam* (Fontana, 1971).
25. Quoted in Sargant, op. cit., p.142.
26. *Gangrene* (Calder, 1959), p.96.
27. Lennox-Boyd's sister was of a like mind. The *Nottingham Guardian Journal* reported her as saying, 'I'm sick hearing about consciences. What we want is a real Conservative who doesn't keep seeing good on the other side.' Lady Huggins, Vice-Chairman of the Conservative Commonwealth Council, was equally firm. Speaking to students at Nottingham University, she said, 'Too much fuss is being made of the death of Mau Mau detainees at Hola Camp. These men were certainly beaten to death, but they were in fact the worst type of criminals.'
28. *Hansard*, Vol.607, Col. 310.
29. see *Gangrene*, op. cit., p.95.
30. *Hansard*, Vol.607, Col. 312 (16 June 1959).
31. An interesting figure who cropped up in Malaya, Kenya and in Ulster was Colonel Arthur (now Sir

Arthur) Young who, after serving as a Commissioner of the City of London Police, was sent to Malaya as the new Police Commissioner early in 1952. Later, in his role as head of the Kenya police force, he was vigorously to defend his men against charges, made by magistrates, of extreme brutality used by individual officers upon detainees and suspects. 'Our police are wonderful,' he said (see *The Times* of 18 August 1954). Sir Arthur also totally failed to clean up the RUC in 1970.

- 32. see Deeley, op. cit.
- 33. see *The Memoirs of General Grivas*, ed. Charles Foley (Longmans, 1964).
- 34. see *The Times*, April 1956.
- 35. Quoted in Deeley, op. cit.
- 36. see Amnesty International report on Aden.
- 37. *Procedures for the Arrest, Interrogation and Detention of Suspected Terrorists in Aden*, Cmnd. 3165 (HMSO, 1966).
- 38. Bowen Report, p.18, final para.
- 39. see Louis Heren, *The Times*, 18 November 1971.
- 40. *The Times*, 18 November 1971.
- 41. see *British Army and Special Branch RUC Brutalities*, by Fr Faul and Fr Murray (Abbey Printers, Cavan, 1972).
- 42. Parker Report, Cmnd. 4901 (HMSO), para. 10. My emphasis.
- 43. Letter to *The Times*, 25 November 1971.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 2

What is Sensory Deprivation?

Sensory deprivation (SD) refers literally to the artificial deprivation of the senses – auditory, visual, tactile and kinesthetic. In connection with the Northern Ireland 'guineapigs' it meant (1) hooding prisoners prior to their interrogation; (2) constant use of a sound machine which produces white noise', a high pitched hissing, mushy sound; (3) long periods of immobilization, being forced to lean against a wall, legs wide apart with only the fingertips touching the wall; (4) little or no food or drink; and (5) being forced to wear loose overalls, several sizes too big. In addition, (6) prisoners were deprived of sleep for days on end; while not technically SD this accentuates the process. There is a purpose behind all these actions. Measures (1), (2), (3) and (5) cause visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile deprivation while measures (4) and (6) deprive the brain of oxygen and sugar necessary for normal functioning. In addition, measures (1), (4) and (6) may disturb the normal body metabolism.

Since the 1950s there have been many experiments into SD but the pace particularly accelerated after the Korean War. In 1958 at McGill University, Montreal, Hebb conducted the most detailed experiments up to that date.^[1] Volunteer students were isolated in an air-conditioned room. They wore translucent goggles so that they could only see a blur of light. They could hear nothing but a constant buzzing noise and they had to wear long cuffs which meant that they couldn't touch anything. As incentive they were offered \$20 for every day they could stay in the room, and each had a 'panic button' which they had only to press to obtain instant relief. They were provided with a comfortable bed and good food.

To start with, the volunteers tended to sleep, but soon they found that it was becoming increasingly difficult to concentrate and they developed an acute desire for any kind of stimulation to break the monotony. Many then began to experience startling visual and auditory hallucinations and after a while were unable to distinguish waking from sleeping. Despite the high pay for just lying on their backs, few could last more than two days and the most anyone lasted was five days. Upon release they were given simple psychological tests which showed that their perceptions had become very disorientated – objects became blurred and fuzzy. More important from the investigators' point of view, while under the SD, they were found to be much more susceptible to *any* type of propaganda – a finding which Bexton *et al.* had indicated four years previously.^[2]

Another psychologist, J.C. Lilly, had studied sensory isolation in 1956 by immersing volunteers in a tank of lukewarm water.^[3] They had face-masks through which to breathe but these also prevented any patterned light from penetrating through. Thus there was little stimulation from light, noise or clothing. Under these conditions subjects became bored and were unable to concentrate, leading in some cases to mental disturbance. The maximum time that any volunteer could last under these conditions was only three hours. Subjects reported feelings of unreality, with a profound loss of identification. They didn't know who they were, where they were, or what was happening to them, and the ensuing feelings of panic forced them all to abandon the experiment.

In 1959 Smith and Lewty confined volunteer nurses in a silent room to see how long they could stick it.^[4] The incentive offered was an equal amount of paid leave for each day they lasted. They were given a

comfortable bed and were even allowed to walk about the room. All volunteers who lasted for more than ten hours reported disordered thinking, and two thirds of them reported fear and panic. Some reported body-image distortions such as 'my head was like a spinning cone going away from my body'. Some experienced violent nightmares and fairly acute paranoia. [Nightmares are commonly experienced during bouts of SD; see Zubek *et al.*^[5] and Freedman *et al.*^[6]]

During the 1960s experiments into SD proliferated. But why did so many psychologists and physiologists want to conduct this research? What practical or medical use was it? And where did all the money come from? In fact, justification for any use of SD outside of interrogation techniques or torture is slight. Back in 1959 Smith and Lewty claimed that SD 'is an important psychiatric tool. It has been used to explain mental abnormalities in various types of illness. Senile nocturnal delirium has also been ascribed to a diminished efficiency of the sensory apparatus and impaired ability to adapt to new sensory stimuli.' By and large this is nonsense. Apart from some limited application in the clinical field of eye surgery, what relevance does this research have? As Dr. Tim Shallice says, 'since the initial Montreal experiments an enormous amount of research has been done but it seems to have contributed little of general theoretic interest to the rest of psychology with the exception of its impetus for arousal theory in the 1950s (eg. Hebb, 1955)'^[7]. Zubek and Bross's 1972 work may be another exception, but there are not many.

Why then has all this work been done? One important cause is that military agencies have pumped a considerable amount of money into the research, for obvious reasons.

Another vital reason seems to be the sociological phenomenon first discussed by Tulving and Madigan (1970) in the context of verbal learning research: the functional autonomy of methods' describing it by, yesterday's methods have become today's objects of study'.^[8] A research field develops whose methods and problems are internally generated. For workers within it, its relevance to other fields of science or its applications become of secondary interest. It becomes self-perpetuating and semi-autonomous, dependent only on external agencies for financial support and psychology as a whole for its academic respectability.

And the 'external agencies who provide the finance? Some of the more blatant examples are the book by Biderman and Zimmer (1961) devoted to research on interrogation methods which was sponsored by the US Air Force,^[9] and Vernon's *Inside the Black Room*, whose acknowledgement states: 'The entire project was made possible by a generous grant-in-aid of research given by the Office of the Surgeon General of the Army, and by the National Science Foundation.' On p.16 of his book Vernon adds that 'while our goal is pure knowledge for its own sake, we have no objection to someone's use of that knowledge'.^[10] That Vernon isn't quite as naive as the previous statement would appear to indicate is soon seen on the next page where he admits that the Hebb experiments at McGill University, while ostensibly devised because of problems of people doing boring jobs suffering from visual hallucinations, were sponsored by the Canadian Defence Research Board, and conducted because of brainwashing techniques used on American POWs in Korea. As Vernon further admits, however, 'the researchers were not permitted to say so in their first publications'. Apart from these two books there are numerous articles and papers,^[11] but more insidious perhaps is the funding of research programmes into SD at various colleges, institutes and universities by large corporations, 'charitable societies' and 'private benefactors' etc. all part of the sinister and at times as in the case of Vietnam, genocidal, military-industrial complex.

The experiments have been going on. What have they proved? Firstly, that SD in its various forms produces very severe effects, both mental and physical. The effects include inability to concentrate, disintegration of logical thought-patterns leading to severe hallucinations – hearing, seeing and feeling things that do not exist. (Examples of these are given in the 'guineapigs' own stories later in the book.) Hooding causes an imbalance in the ratio of oxygen to carbon dioxide in the air breathed and this causes mental confusion. The wall-standing, which is deliberately made to sound so innocuous by apologists like Sir

Edmund Compton. is extremely painful – especially when accompanied by beatings – and causes, in addition to fatigue and swollen wrists and ankles, poor circulation of the blood which leads to a reduced supply of oxygen and sugar to the brain. The restricted and in some cases almost non-existent diet was also sugar-free (Storr has pointed out that the brain needs three things if it is to function efficiently; sensory stimulation, sugar and oxygen.^[12]). Experiments into the effects of semi-starvation and excessive dieting by various psychologists have consistently shown that the subject's thinking ability was impaired as the effects of the food deprivation increased.^[13] Perceptual judgement is also impaired and the subject becomes apathetic and unresponsive. Lack of exercise increases the bad effects. Prolonged sleep deprivation ensures a progressive disintegration of personality and rational behaviour. Paranoid symptoms emerge, and at the same time powers of rational perception appear to be disturbed. Zubek suggests that susceptibility to pain increases, too.^[14]

Here we come to the real root of the trouble from an army's point of view. 'Civilian' research may tell you something about how SD works; it may add to your knowledge of how interrogation methods may be made more effective; it may provide academic kudos and sinecures for army-paid hacks, but it still doesn't go far enough. The reasons are simple. The basic one is that the necessary stress is absent with volunteer subjects. Sargant and others have pointed out that the breakdown process in the individual is almost inevitably accelerated when additional stress is introduced.^[15] As Swank and Marchland recorded in their investigations into battle fatigue and crack-ups amongst Allied soldiers in the Second World War, after an average of fifty days' severe combat the great majority of soldiers

lost their ability to distinguish the different noises of combat ... They became easily startled and confused and became tense. They were irritable, frequently 'blew their tops', over-responded to all stimuli ... This state of hyperreactivity was followed insidiously by another group of symptoms referred to as 'emotional exhaustion'. The men became dull and listless, mentally and physically retarded, pre-occupied and unable to remember details. This was accompanied by indifference and apathy ... In such cases bizarre contradictory behaviour could occur.^[16]

This is similar to the state of mind the Chinese and Koreans were able to induce in American and British POWs, which Hinkle and Wolff called 'emotional bankruptcy'.^[17] The more stress, the sooner the crack-up.

This is where the experiments with volunteers prove inadequate. In most of the experiments the volunteers' motivation for putting up with SD has been money – often not all that much, either. In some cases psychology students who volunteer may have had added motivation in the form of scientific curiosity, but in all cases their surroundings were comfortable, they were well fed, could sleep if they wanted to, knew deep down that they really had little or nothing to be frightened about and, most important of all, had a panic button. They could quit whenever things started to get rough.

In some experiments the Army have doubtless used their own soldiers – though they have not unnaturally been reticent about publishing their findings – and it is known that the 'guards', the men who continually kicked and beat the 'guineapigs' up off the floor and made them lean against the wall each time they collapsed, have had themselves during their training at the several Psychological Warfare Units in England to experience some facets of SD.^[18] But even this isn't enough for the ardent researcher or interrogator. The soldiers know that they're going to be rewarded for putting up with the SD. They don't have any information to conceal, they know where they are, who is experimenting on them, that an experiment is going on, that they won't actually be killed or beaten too badly. They cannot be made to experience the blind terror and panic of the 4 a.m. 'knock on the door', the savage beatings, the horror of having not the slightest idea where you are, the knowledge that you can easily be shot dead for 'trying to escape' – the old Spanish 'ley des fuegos' – the knowledge that your family is totally ignorant of your whereabouts. Civilian volunteer experiments into SD often produced feelings of paranoia amongst the subjects; with the Irish victims it was not paranoia, it was very real, genuine fear.

Civilian experiments have provided some 'useful' data. The military experiments into interrogation techniques in Britain's sordid little colonial wars, especially in Aden, had produced more experience. Northern Ireland, already a testing-ground for the latest military hardware from CS gas to remote-controlled bomb-disposal gadgetry, was to be the scene for one of the vilest experiments yet.

Footnotes Chapter 2:

1. D. O. Hebb, *Textbook of Psychology* (Saunders, 1958).
2. Bexton, Herron and Scott, 'Effects of Decreased Variation in Sensory Environment', in *Canadian Journal of Psychology*, 8 (1954), pp. 70-76.
3. J. C. Lilly, 'Mental Effects of Reduction of Ordinary Levels of Physical Stimuli on Intact Healthy Persons', in *Psychological Research Reports*, 5 (1956), pp. 1-9.
4. Smith and Lewty, 'Perceptual Isolation Using a Silent Room', in *Lancet*, 12 September 1959, pp. 342-5.
5. J. P. Zubek (ed.), *Sensory Deprivation: Fifteen Years of Research* (Appleton-Century-Croft, New York, 1969).
6. Freedman *et al.*, 'Perceptual Cognitive Changes in SD', in P. Solomon, *et al.* (eds), *Sensory Deprivation* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1961).
7. Article in *Cognition*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (1973), pp. 385-405.
8. Tulving and Madigan, 'Memory and Verbal Learning', in *Annual Review of Psychology*, 21(1970), pp. 437-84.
9. Biderman and Zimmer, *The Manipulation of Human Behaviour* (Wiley, New York, 1961).
10. J. Vernon, *Inside the Black Room: Studies of Sensory Deprivation* (Penguin, 1966).
11. For example: Myers *et al.*, 'Experimental Assessment of Limited Sensory and Social Environment. Summary Results of the HumRRO Program of the Army Leadership Research Unit'. Monterey, February 1962.
12. Storr, 'Why Hooding is Mental Torture', in the *Sunday Times*, 21 November 1971.
13. Including Sanford (1937), McClelland and Atkinson (1948), and Gilchrist and Nesberg (1952).
14. J. P. Zubek, 'Prolonged Sensory and Perceptual Deprivation', in *British Medical Bulletin*, 20, pp. 38-42.
15. W. Sargant, *Battle for the Mind* (Pan, Revised Edition 1959).
16. R. L. Swank and E. Marchand, 'Combat Neurosis', in *American Medical Association Archive of Neurological Psychiatry*, 55 (1946), pp. 236-47.
17. Hinkle and Wolff, 'Communist Interrogation', in *ibid.*, 76 (1956).
18. There are Psychological Warfare Units at Catterick, Warminster and Maresfield, for example. Also, see the Parker Report, para. 13.
Lord Gardiner, in his minority report to the Parker Report, admits (para. 6) that in April 1971 'officers and men of the English Intelligence Centre held a seminar on the procedures in Northern Ireland to teach orally the procedures to the Royal Ulster Constabulary'.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 3 The Swoop — The First Forty-Eight Hours

When Brian Faulkner took over as Prime Minister on 23 March 1971 the issue was not whether internment was to come but when and on what scale.^[1]

Brian Arthur Deane Faulkner has been described as many things. Former Unionist Cabinet ministers, including the former Unionist Prime Minister Terence O'Neill, have described him as 'devious', 'treacherous', 'scheming' and 'totally untrustworthy'. No one has doubted his overweening ambition, which for years has caused him to wheel and deal, stab his colleagues in the back and fight tooth and nail for power. At last, after almost a quarter of a century of Unionist politics, he 'made it', to become Stormont's last Prime Minister. His premiership was to be the shortest in Northern Ireland's chequered history – twelve months to the day – and he was to preside over the ruin of Stormont which, ironically enough, he was to do more to destroy than any other single man with his introduction, yet again, of internment.

As a former Minister of Home Affairs in 1959 Faulkner had been responsible for the implementation of internment before, aided and abetted by the trusty William Stout. He became convinced that internment in itself was a cast-iron recipe for success. This was to be his greatest mistake. During the IRA's abortive border campaign which commenced on 11 December 1956 there was little or no popular support for the movement from the Catholic section of the population, upon whom the men on the run had to rely heavily. The campaign was therefore limited to the border areas and soon proved to be a failure. Nonetheless it was sporadically continued for several years, with the only result that those interned had to rot away behind bars for even longer. Internment in the Republic ended in March 1959, but it was not until April 1961 that the last internees from Crumlin Road jail in Belfast were released. Even then, the IRA did not make its 'Statement to the Irish People' formally announcing the abandonment of the campaign until February 1962.^[2] It is important to study history, but it is even more important to draw the correct lessons from it. That Brian Faulkner did not do so even he has had half-heartedly to admit. But it matters not whether he now realizes his mistakes or not; everyone else has.

The Army was generally opposed to internment, not on moral grounds, but on expedient ones. General Sir Henry Tuzo consistently stated, whenever the subject was brought up, that they simply did not have enough concrete information to be sure of getting the right men. Moreover he felt that selective internment only of Catholics would unite the minority and make the Army's task more difficult. He was right. But Faulkner was not to be denied. Less than three weeks after becoming Prime Minister he had insisted that, despite Army scepticism, the Director of Military Intelligence at Lisburn was to coordinate matters with the RUC on an 'internment working party'. Lists of names and addresses were to be drawn up. The Army actually went a stage further. Officially they may have regarded internment as a waste of time, but the Intelligence section at least felt that it would provide them with a golden opportunity to experiment with new SD techniques. Consequently, in April, special instructors from one of the Joint Services' Interrogation Centres, probably the

one at Ashford in Kent but possibly from Maresfield or Warminster, were sent over to instruct the RUC in SD techniques and to set up the 'interrogation centre'. Sources claim that they were led by two Army Intelligence Operatives, Lieutenants Alan Horner and Timothy Goulding.^[3]

Several months passed and there was no sign of the violence waning. The Provisional IRA intensified its bombing campaign; the Army shot the unarmed Cussack and Beattie in Derry and forced the SDLP, albeit reluctantly, to walk out of Stormont; and Brian Faulkner continued to insist on internment. The Army still said that they hadn't enough information, but on 23 July, using 1,800 troops plus RUC men, they mounted a series of raids on houses throughout the province. The purpose was not arrests, but documents and address books. In the event it was to be a dry run for internment day, which was set for 10 August. Within a week their lists were as complete as they could hope for, given the limited amount of time at their disposal. The *Sunday Times* claims that the list had just over 500 names on it. 'They fell into three categories. No more than 120-130 were gunmen or officers in either wing of the IRA. A further 350 were regarded by the police as "IRA sympathisers", weeded out of a list of about 1,200 names ... A further police contribution was a list of some 50 or more old men whose interest was solely that they had been interned before.' (One of them, Liam Mulholland, was 78.) Finally there was a special group, the left-wing socialists of the People's Democracy plus a couple of people from the NI Civil Rights Association.^[4] As Faulkner was later to admit to Heath when questioned about this group, 'they weren't gunmen or IRA men but they would have called meetings to protest against internment'.

As the *Sunday Times* put it,

The problem was how many of these 500 to intern. No answer was ever agreed. The Army and police mistrusted each other: the Army believed that the police list was politically motivated, and the police believed that the Army list showed inadequate local knowledge. Further, the Army was divided between those who wanted to do the job quickly before Provisional strength grew any more, and those who urged waiting till more was known about that growth. One school of thought inside the Army had favoured internment back in the spring, when no more than 50 to 60 people would have been 'lifted', they reckoned. The perfectionists now wanted another three months to prepare really accurate lists – they were ignored as being quite unrealistic.^[5]

On 5 August, following an inconclusive meeting of the Joint Security Committee at Stormont, Faulkner and Tuzo flew secretly to London. There Faulkner sold internment to a Cabinet (including William Whitelaw) who, although sceptical about its efficacy, could come up with no other dramatic alternatives. Tuzo was overruled. All was set for the night of 10 August.

Enter Harry Thornton. An inoffensive, hard-working man, he was travelling home from work in his van along the Springfield Road in Belfast. His van backfired. A soldier ran out of Springfield barracks and shot Thornton dead. His passenger, Arthur Murphy was dragged from the van and savagely assaulted, as an Army doctor later testified. Crowds gathered round. Some women erected a small shrine on the bloodstained pavement. That night there was severe rioting against the Army in the Springfield area. The Army decided to alter its timetable. Internment was brought forward by one day. All was now set for 9 August.

They still weren't circumspect enough. That internment was coming was almost an open secret. Few leading Provos were sleeping at home. The Army tried again to get the 'lifting' restricted to 150 people. Faulkner still disagreed. 450 was now his figure. And so, at 4 a.m., on 9 August the internment swoop swung into operation. 342 were taken from their beds – the others on the list being 'unavailable' – and dragged into waiting trucks to be taken to the holding centres. In all the excitement everyone overlooked one thing – all the arrests were completely illegal, since no police accompanied the soldiers who, even under the Special Powers Acts, had neither the authority nor the legal power to make the arrests.^[6]

Amongst the 342 arrested were the first twelve 'guineapigs'.

The 'guineapigs' can be split into three groups. Four from Belfast – Kevin Hannaway, Joe Clarke, Francis McGuigan, and Jim Auld – were taken to Girdwood barracks, behind Crumlin Road jail, along with 181 other men. The next four men came from County Armagh and County Down – Brian Turley and Pat McNally from Armagh City, Gerry McKerr from Lurgan and Sean McKenna from Newry. After brief stops at subsidiary holding centres they were taken to Ballykinler where they were held for the first forty-eight hours along with eighty-five other men. The third group came from County Derry and County Tyrone and consisted of Mickey Montgomery and Mickey Donnelly from Derry City, Paddy Joe McClean from Beragh and Pat Shivers from Toomebridge. After brief stops at either Ebrington or Ballykelly barracks they were transported to Magilligan camp where another sixty-four men were being held. Treatment at the holding centres during the first forty-eight hours varied.

Magilligan

Sixty-eight men were brought to Magilligan camp on the morning of 9 August. They arrived in a variety of vehicles, from Army 'pigs' to furniture vans. At Magilligan there was little physical brutality *per se*. The men were forced to squat on the floor of the huts in small groups while they awaited interrogation. Toilet facilities were frequently denied and the food was inadequate (one small bowl of watery stew on the first day, porridge, two sausages and beans, described by several people as 'cold and inedible', and finally, for 'tea' on the second day, more cold beans and a fish roll). The worst deprivation was the lack of sleep. All the men had been dragged out of their beds at about 4 a.m. on Monday morning. The first evening they were given camp beds and two Army blankets, but despite their fatigue, sleep was almost impossible since the soldiers on guard duty continually rattled their batons along the sides of the corrugated iron huts, threw stones at it and kept up a string of shouted obscenities all night. This policy, at first believed by the detainees to be merely the sadism of the few, turns out to have been a deliberate tactical policy, as we shall see later. The second day passed as boringly as the first. Twenty men were weeded out and released as the rest were sporadically and desultorily interrogated. The four 'guineapigs' had by now been selected and put together in one hut. Unknown to them, their fate had already been decided. The noise continued during the second night and then, at 4 a.m. they were roused. Thirty-six men were transferred to the prison ship HMS *Maidstone*. A different fate awaited the four 'guineapigs'. They were handcuffed, thick, stifling hoods were put over their heads and tightened, and they were forced into helicopters. The first stage of their nightmare proper had begun.

Ballykinler

At Ballykinler conditions were worse than at Magilligan. On their way to the camp in the Army 'pigs' many of the men were badly assaulted by the soldiers escorting them. Several extracts from some of the men's personal accounts follow.

Sean McKenna, aged 42, of Newry:

When we arrived at Ballykinler camp we were hauled out by the feet onto the ground. The soldier who had threatened me on the journey took me into the compound on the way there and stood in front of me. Pat White from Newry fell, and two soldiers gave him an awful beating with batons while he was on the ground. and hauled him to his feet: it was really terrible. The soldier with me had my left arm in an arm-lock grip and he was running me forward at great speed. As we approached the corner post of the compound – it was concrete with wire netting on it – he went to the side of it and rammed me into the post as hard as he could. I was not expecting this as I thought we were going past it. I tried to save myself but the wrist and my right side took most of the blow. They are still very sore. The soldier still held on to me.

The crowd of Army personnel thought this was very funny. I didn't. One heard screams of the men caught and the vile unchristian language will live with me until I die. I didn't think man could be so cruel to his fellow man. We had to give our names etc. at the hut we were taken to. Then we were made to sit with our hands behind our heads, up against a wall and looking at the yellow paint about six feet from the floor. There were approximately forty to fifty men in the hut. This sitting went on all Monday and well into the night. We were taken out occasionally but most of the time we were given exercises to do, which were enough. All the time they seemed to be grading the men in the hut as they brought men out and others in. About 3 a.m. Tuesday, the exercises' etc. stopped and we were allowed to lie flat on the floor and sleep as we were, if we could. I slept, as I was exhausted. It only lasted for an hour or even less. Tuesday brought the same routine. Every position was a torture to me. Time is hard to remember but I think it was about 11 a.m. when we were taken out for a walk to a washroom. The distance from the hut to the washroom was about fifty yards and along this road we were ordered by soldiers with stripes to double our steps, run on the spot etc. We had about two minutes in the washroom, had to dry our faces with a filthy towel and then were dashed out again and the performance was repeated on the way back to the hut. The shouting at us was outrageous. During Monday and Tuesday we had any amount of water to drink on request and half a mug of rather nasty stew was served to us on Monday night and on Tuesday we got tea some time in the morning. I'm pretty vague about what we had after that.

Brian Turley of Armagh:

We arrived at between 8 a.m. and 9 a.m. in the camp. We were forced to sit with our feet against the wall, our hands behind our heads, and look at the ceiling for approximately fifteen minutes at a time. This and various other 'exercises' went on well into Tuesday morning, approximately 3 a.m. We were allowed to lie on the floor for two hours without any covering of any kind. We had a half a mug of stew on Monday at noon and a cup of tea between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. That was all we had to eat. We had been searched and all our personal belongings removed. On arrival we were examined by the Army Medical Officer. An egg sandwich and a cup of tea sometime on Tuesday morning and we were left alone until about noon. The physical tortures started again and lasted much longer. They were also much tougher to do. This included running on the spot. If you wanted to go to the toilet you asked the NCO in charge and when he felt like it he let you go. For the first day there was no tissue in the toilets. At about 7 p.m. on the second day they took me to another hut and we sat about for an hour or so. The 'exercises' started again and went on until after midnight. After protest the four of us left in the billet were issued with one blanket, one mattress and were promised a peaceful night's sleep. We were told that if there was any bother they would take away the bedding. Half an hour later we were wakened and told to go to the toilet. We had just settled down again when we were ordered to go again on the double outside to a hole in the ground. I protested that I didn't want to go and they said 'get up you bastard and go'. Outside they made us turn round in circles and relieve ourselves while we were running. This went on at half-hour intervals all during the night. By this time I had no idea of the time but sometime in the morning it ceased. At times after we returned from the toilets we were allowed to settle down and were then made to change beds with each other. On Wednesday morning a policeman came over with a hood and handcuffs.

Gerry McKerr, aged 27, from Lurgan confirms Turley's account of 'the running urination exercise'. He also adds to the general account of the men who had to do the earlier 'exercises':

I was given a medical examination and interrogated. On returning from the interrogation I was put in another hut and made to do exercises constantly. During this period one of the men in the hut, Brian Morgan from Lurgan, had a heart attack and was taken to hospital. One of the soldiers remarked, 'Has the bastard snuffed it?' We were made to sleep on the floor without blankets. Our clothes were damp with sweat and we became very cold ... After each period of running around the hole and urinating we were ordered back to the huts and made to say, 'Goodnight, Sergeant. Goodnight, Corporal.'^[7]

Turley, McKerr, McKenna and McNally were the last four left in the huts. Of the other eighty-five men brought to Ballykinler, nine had been released and the remaining seventy-six transferred to HMS *Maidstone*.

Subsequently, Sir Edmund Compton was to 'investigate' the treatment meted out to detainees at Ballykinler. He did not interview any of the detainees but 'considered' newspaper reports and statements from the Association for Legal Justice. However, he did speak, he says, to the senior officer of the Royal Military Police at Ballykinler, two staff sergeants and two NCOs as well as visiting the camp.^[8] Other parts of the Compton Report will be dealt with later, but it is instructive to look briefly at the Compton Committee's description of what they claim took place at the camp. In their conclusions (paras. 159-60) the committee

found:

The evidence we took from the military police in charge of the Ballykinler huts confirms that the exercises took place, *that their nature and duration was much as described in the allegations and that they were done under some degree of compulsion*. We noted the inconsistency in this evidence as to the degree of compulsion. On balance we have formed the view that while the supervisory staff believed that compulsion was limited to securing a simultaneous change of position, the choice of position being left to the arrested person, in practice the man in charge kept control by selecting positions and ordering all the persons in the hut to take up a given position from time to time. There is conflict of evidence on the action taken in the case of disobedience. The allegation is that those who refused or failed to carry out an exercise were assaulted. Against this, we record the evidence of the military police that such assault did not take place, that generally speaking orders were obeyed but those who did not comply were ignored. [If this was so, why didn't the rest of the men 'fail to comply' with the orders – or were they all enjoying them so much?] The medical evidence suggested that one of the detainees, Mr. Smith, should not have been required to perform exercises that imposed an unusual strain on the back. Mr. Rodgers complained of a sore right knee, a condition consistent with the performance of some of the exercises described; there was however no physical sign of this condition, though pain in the knee persisted until 17 August. There were no marks or bruises consistent with the complaints of beating.

We think that it is plain that these compulsory exercises must have caused hardship to some at least of those who were made to do them, especially those in poor physical condition, and we have noted as a particular hardship that *some men were woken up to do them in order to secure uniformity of action in the hut*. On the other hand, we do not regard these exercises as 'cruel', if the adjective means that the exercises were thought of and carried out with a view to hurting or degrading the men who had to do them. We prefer to take the view that the exercises were devised to counteract the cold and the stiffness of which the arrested persons complained, but that it should have been foreseen that a system of voluntary changes of position at set times was bound to turn into a form of physical drill compulsorily performed without regard to the relative capacity of the performers, and that the routine was thoughtlessly prolonged after it had served its proper purpose. We think there was a lack of judgement here, but not cruelty or brutality, and we think that the complainants may have suffered hardship but we make no findings of deliberate ill-treatment. [My emphasis throughout – JM.]

By this stage many readers could be forgiven for feeling that the Compton Report was not even a proper 'whitewash', as most of the papers branded it, but a deliberate insult to the reader's intelligence. Lines such as 'we prefer to take the view that the exercises were devised to counteract the cold and stiffness', and 'we think that there was a lack of judgement here, but not cruelty or brutality', will surely go down in the history of the absurd.

Compton's faith in the Army witnesses who assured him that they hadn't laid a finger on anyone may have been touching, but others were not so naive – Judge Conaghan for one. The following is an extract from the *Irish Times*:

A Northern Ireland judge ruled yesterday that men were detained in 'primitive circumstances' which were 'deliberate, unlawful and harsh', following their arrest by security forces during the big internment swoop on August 9th last year. Judge Rory Conaghan was giving his reserved judgment at Lurgan County Court in a civil action brought by a former detainee, William John Moore, of Bleary, Portadown, against Mr. Graham Shillington, Chief Constable of the RUC, and the British Ministry of Defence for alleged wrongful arrest and assault. Mr. Moore was awarded the total damages he had claimed, \$720, which is the highest amount a County Court Judge can award ...

Turning to how the exercises were initiated, the judge said that the military witnesses gave evidence in the absence of each other, as did some of the plaintiff's witnesses. Three army witnesses, Lieutenant Barton, Sergeant Smith, and Corporal Robert Melville Graham gave three conflicting accounts. Judge Conaghan said: 'I have come to the conclusion that all three were telling lies about this matter. It is also inconceivable that detail of so important an operation would be left to work itself out haphazardly.'

Judge Conaghan turned to the evidence of Captain Dr. David Plant who examined the detainees at Ballykinler. His evidence was that on Monday the men were tired, and on Tuesday were more tired, but he would not accept phrases such as 'exhausted' or 'prostrate' or any colourful word or that the men showed signs of having been the subject of cruelty or ill treatment. Examining other aspects of the doctor's evidence, Judge Conaghan recalled that the witness withdrew a statement that he had seen men moving about outside the huts to latrines and also 'going to food, I think,' after it was pointed out to him that there had been unchallenged evidence that the men had all been fed where they were

confined. Dr. Plant had also given two different answers when asked if he knew the detainees were going to be interrogated. The judge said: 'Perhaps these are just slips but they may very well not be and should not appear in the evidence of a doctor.'^[9]

No disciplinary action was taken against Lt. Barton, Sgt. Smith or Cpl. Graham, whom Judge Conaghan had clearly indicted as liars – and thence perjurers whom he regarded as guilty of assault as well. Nor did the good Dr. Plant apparently suffer any official opprobrium. Subsequently sixteen of the men who were held at Ballykinler and had to undergo what Compton calls 'position changes' were awarded \$9,360 between them by the courts. The rest have received nothing as yet and several were still held, three years later, in Long Kesh, without charge or trial.

Girdwood Barracks

Girdwood, being in Belfast, held the largest number of men. 185 men were taken there to be 'processed' and interrogated, amongst them four of the 'guineapigs' – Jim Auld, Francis McGuigan, Joe Clarke and Kevin Hannaway. Joe Clarke, 19, made the most detailed statement about the first forty-eight hours:

I was arrested at home on Monday August 9th, 1971, at 4:30 a.m. It was a total military operation: there was no RUC involved. The arresting military could not have been any more civil – they were in no way aggressive. After a peremptory search of the house they asked for Joseph Clarke. I said that I was he. They then told me that they were arresting me under the Special Powers Act. I was fully dressed (unlike many men who were dragged out into the streets in their pyjamas) and after asking my father to contact a named solicitor I went with the military. They put me into a three-ton Army lorry. At this stage there was no one else in the lorry. In the lorry I was asked to take my shoes off and these were put into a bag. Then my hands were tied behind my back and then secured by another rope to the lorry. By this time another person whom I now know to be Phil McCullough had been put into the lorry beside me. We were driven directly to Girdwood Park barracks. The only incident which occurred on this journey was just as we arrived at Girdwood when a soldier who was guarding us in the lorry produced a long steel bolt and said 'I wish some of you boys had been aggressive.' This operation was carried out by Paratroopers stationed at Springfield Road police station. On arrival at Girdwood I was taken out of the lorry, and, still barefoot and handcuffed, was frog-marched into the reception area where my particulars were taken by the RUC. My photograph was also taken now. My personal effects were taken from me. The binding was now taken off my hands and I was led into a large gymnasium where I was made to sit on the floor. Then after about one hour I was taken from there, led along a corridor into another room where I was confronted by two Special Branch RUC men who questioned me generally and wrote down everything I said. The interview lasted about half an hour and during it I was kicked in the legs and called a 'lying bastard' by one of the men. After this I was led upstairs into a large room which sported the portraits of the Duke of Edinburgh and the Queen of England. I must have been in this room for about six hours during which time I was made to sit motionless, alternatively on a chair and on the floor. I was also given a cup of tea in this room but since there were only twelve cups between about ninety prisoners everyone had to take their turn with these unwashed cups.

At the end of the six-hour period I was taken back down to the gymnasium and made to sit on the floor. After some time I was given some stew and a piece of bread to eat. Some time later I was again taken away for more interrogation by the Special Branch. This interrogation lasted about 1 1/2 hours. There was no ill-treatment this time and mostly concerned any knowledge that I might have about the IRA and known Republicans. At the end of this, it was back to sitting in the gym. At about 6 p.m. I got more stew to eat and then at about 8 p.m. I was taken away for more interrogation which lasted this time until 11:30-12 midnight. There was no maltreatment during this interrogation except that one of the interrogators threatened to have me thrown out of a helicopter ... After this third interview I was taken back to the gym again where everyone was bedded down. I was given a camp bed and blankets and allowed a shower. I was then bedded down but it was virtually impossible to sleep due to constant interruptions by the RUC, SB and military.

Awakened about 8 a.m. by the military. Given a wash. Some breakfast consisting of stale cornflakes, bread and tea. Had to sit on the floor again. At about noon permitted to have a five-minute walk outside under escort and one cigarette. On the way back into the gym I was stopped by two MP sergeants, one of whom asked me my name and address and said that he had seen me throwing a nail bomb at his jeep on last Sunday afternoon. I told him it wasn't me. As I went to move off one of them grabbed me by the arm and said that if I didn't get that smile off my face he'd wipe it off for me. Alternative sitting and standing in gym ... As I was seated an MP corporal came over to me and said, 'I don't like you at

all. I'd like to bash your fucking face in.' He went away but after about half an hour he sent another corporal over to me who said that I was talking and that I had to go over to the first corporal. I went over and he made me do twelve press-ups. No talking, by the way, was allowed. At any rate, the point is, I wasn't talking. Then after a few minutes the same corporal called me over again and said, 'I'll fix you,' and made me do another twelve press-ups. I did them but he said I'd only done eight. A sergeant came over and told me to go back to my place and that I'd done twelve. The sergeant seemed to be reprimanding the corporal ... A private came over to me and offered me chewing-gum. He said, 'I like you. I'll look after you. Anything you want, ask me.' I remained in the gym, alternatively sitting and standing all that day and during this time the private kept coming over to me and talking, generally at first, but then asking me if I knew anything about the IRA and if I knew where any guns were. He told me I could tell him, as he was my friend. We were given tea that evening – beans and stew and a banana. Between 10 p.m. and 11 p.m. SB and RUC men arrived and shouted out thirty names. These men I understand were released. The remainder of us were seated in groups of five on the floor, and each group was surrounded by MPs with drawn batons. Some of the MPs pointed to different people with their batons and threatened them. Along with three others I was taken into the cook-house and made to clean pots, dishes and butcher equipment. We were made to do this at the double. At the end of this we were taken back to the gym where Harry Taylor [Belfast's best-known SB man – JM] and another SB man were taking names, addresses and ages. Then there was a further weeding-out process where men were taken away in groups of six at the direction of Taylor and these I now understand to have been taken to Crumlin Road prison. At the end of this process there were only two of us left in the gym, a Francis McGuigan and myself. We were led into separate rooms where I was told to lie down on a bed to get some sleep. RUC and military kept coming in and kicking the bed and shouting abuse at me, like 'Get up you bastard, you're not going to get any sleep.' One particular uniformed RUC man came into the room and kicked the bed, saying, 'Why aren't you asleep?' I replied that it was because he and people like him kept coming in and kicking the bed. He then said, 'Clarke, I know you from the court case,' [Joe Clarke had in fact no criminal record – JM.] As he said that, he kicked my legs apart and stuck his heel into my genitals. Other MPs came in and said that half my district had been wiped out. At about 4 a.m. on Wednesday a SB man came in and said that I was to be taken for a ride in a helicopter and that I was to be thrown out.^[10]

Kevin Hannaway got even worse treatment than Clarke. He had to undergo the 'helicopter treatment' – forced to run the gauntlet between two rows of baton-wielding MPs, pushed into a helicopter whose rotors were already turning, threatened with death and then pushed out backwards only to discover that they were only four feet off the ground, then forced to run the gauntlet again. He was also forced over the 'obstacle course' several times while being batoned and kicked.^[11] Joe Clarke and Francis McGuigan spent the first forty-eight hours of their ordeal in Girdwood. Jim Auld and Kevin Hannaway, after arrival there early on the morning of 9 August, were transferred to Crumlin Road jail through the hole in the back wall of the jail, where they were not officially received but were still in the custody of the RUC. At 4.30 a.m. on Wednesday morning, after being in custody for forty-eight hours they were beaten back to Girdwood over the 'obstacle course' and reunited with Clarke and McGuigan. The grimmest week in their lives was about to begin.

Footnotes Chapter 3:

1. Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster* (Penguin, 1972), p. 260.
2. see [John McGuffin, Internment](#) (Anvil Press, Tralee, 1973), p. 78.
3. see *Combat*, the paper of the UVF, Vol. 1, No. 6 (25 April 1974).
4. *Ulster*, op. cit., p. 263.
5. *ibid.*, p. 264.
6. For an explanation of the legal reasons for this, see McGuffin, op. cit., pp. 210-12.
7. These statements were taken in Crumlin Road jail on 20 and 23 August 1971, and can be seen in the offices of the Association for Legal Justice.
8. Compton Report, Cmnd. 4823 (HMSO, 1971), para. 152.
9. *Irish Times*, 19 February 1972.
10. Statement of Joe Clarke to the Association for Legal Justice, 22 August 1971.

11. For a further account of the 'helicopter treatment' and the 'obstacle course', as well as an explanation of the Compton Report's findings on conditions in Girdwood barracks, see McGuffin, op. cit., pp. 11-18 and 128-32.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 4 The Experiment

'I hear music and there's no one there.'

This is an account of the next eight days. It is taken from the victims' own words, in their statements to the Association for Legal Justice and from private interviews. First Joe Clarke, then aged 19, single, motor mechanic:

After being hooded I was led to the helicopter and I was thrown bodily into the helicopter. During this exercise my hands and wrists were hurt due to the others handcuffed to me not being pushed equally. (Before being led off to the helicopter, I understand that one of the hooded men, now known to be F. McGuigan, collapsed when the hood was first applied.) On being put into the copter, the handcuffs were removed and were applied to the back of the hood to tighten it around the head. The helicopter took off and a journey which I would estimate to have taken about an hour began. The helicopter then landed at a destination unknown to me and we were taken from the copter and led into a building and eventually into a room where I was made to stand in a search position against a wall. My position was the same as for other men – fully stretched, hands as far apart as humanly possible and feet as far from the wall as possible. Back rigid and head held up. Not allowed to relax any of the joints at all. If any relaxation of limbs – arms, elbow joints, legs, knee joints – someone came along and grabbed the limb in a rough manner and put it back into position again. After being against the wall for a few hours. I was taken away and brought, I was told, to a doctor. Sometime during this period I was taken out of this room, put into a helicopter and flown away. I was always handcuffed and hooded. When the 'copter landed I was put into a lorry, driven a short distance, transferred to a jeep, five-minute journey, put into another 'copter, taken for half-hour journey. End of journey put into a police van, driven short distance, five-ten minutes, beaten about the face and body, transferred to other vehicle. Holding my face, asked why, said that I did not want to be beaten again. Assured that I wouldn't be. Brought into a building, hood removed, shown detention form. Hood replaced, return journey as before

The build-up to this collapse was frequent numbing of the hands which when it happened I closed my fist only to find that my hands were beaten against the wall until I opened my fingers again and put my hands back into position. On the other occasion I tried to rest by leaning my head against the wall but the response to this was my head was 'banged' on the wall and shaken about until I resumed my position. All the time there was the constant whirring noise like a helicopter blades going around. From the sound of this noise I would say that it was played into the room where I was because on the occasions that I was taken from this room even outside the door of the room the noise was noticeably vague almost to be inaudible.

As I have said, I collapsed completely after that long period of time. I was brought round and carried out into the main room again and made resume my position as before against the wall.

There then followed a series of collapses – I could not say how many times I collapsed. Initially my hands and legs were beaten whenever this happened and the insides of my feet were kicked until my ankles were swollen to almost twice their normal size. After a number of these collapsings I was then made sit on the floor, with my knees up to my chest, my head between my knees and my arms folded around my knees. In this position I was swayed backwards and forwards in order I presume to bring my circulation back. Whenever this was done I was put against the wall again in the original position. The noise was insistent, driving mental resistance to its utmost. I thought that I was going mad. This noise was the only noise one heard save the groans of the other people lined up against the wall.

All the time that I was against this wall I got bread and water once and water alone on two other occasions. This was fed to me by the hood being lifted to my nose and bread and water was fed into my mouth in this way. I should emphasize that I was fed, I did not feed myself. The cup of water was put to my mouth and the bread was put into my mouth. I cannot possibly estimate for what duration I was against this wall and underwent the collapsing experiences and physical torture against this wall, but I would estimate that it must have been at least two full days and nights. During all

of the time no sleep was permitted. At the end of the period I must say that I was extremely fatigued both physically and mentally. I was certainly verging on complete mental exhaustion, suffering delusions which were of nightmarish nature. I was taken out of this room – into another room where my hood was removed and I found myself confronted by two plain-clothes RUC SB men, one of whom was standing beside a table and the other was seated behind it. I was told by these men that I had asked to see them. I do not recollect ever having done so. I told them I did not ask for anyone. They then began to interrogate me. These men did not introduce themselves to me, so I do not know who they were. The hood was removed during this entire interview. These men interrogated me for a couple of hours. I should say that at the start of this interview I imagined that I was talking to my brother. At the end of this interview the hood was put back on again and I was put back into the other room and put against the wall. I asked where I was but I was told that I could not be told.

As I was against the wall this time I was given a beating: kicked about the legs, a knee was stuck in the base of my spine and the hood was jerked back tight on my face, hurting my neck. I collapsed at the end of this beating. I was also punched in the ribs and in the stomach, as well as being nipped. I was brought round after collapsing and put up against the wall again. The nipping and punching on the arms and ribs commenced. At that I shouted 'Fuck off', and punched one of my assailants. I was then grabbed by a number of people and I was punched, kicked and kneed all over the body, stomach, ribs and back of my head. The hood was pulled tightly around my neck, nearly suffocating me. I was then put back against the wall. After a short time against it I collapsed. I do not know for how long I was out. The next thing that I clearly remember was sitting in this small room with the same two men as before, who again told me that I sent for them. The hood was taken off for this interview as well. This interview lasted only a very short time, a matter of minutes. I was re-hooded and taken out again into another room where I was beaten continuously for a long number of hours. During the beating I was asked questions concerning the IRA, naming various people, and they also asked me about arms dumps. During all of this time I was standing. Due to the beating – mostly about the body and head, not face – I fell unconscious. When I awakened I was lying on a floor and as I was waking I was being punched. During this period of unconsciousness I had a dream where a friend of mine – my fiancée's brother – bought a scrap-yard. Whenever I awoke and found myself being beaten I began to struggle – I kicked one person and punched another. I was then overcome – my hands were put behind my back and I was handcuffed in this position. There was an attempt to handcuff my ankles. I was then carried down a flight of stairs into a further interrogation – by a different person than previously. The hood was taken off. He told me that I had sent for him. I said that I did not but that I had asked for a priest. He told me that I would get no priest there. After a few questions I was re-hooded and led outside and into another room where I was made, hands still handcuffed behind my back, stand facing a wall with the crown of my head leaning against the wall. As I stood there my arms were pulled further back causing my wrists to be cut and torn. I was left alone in this room un-hooded for a few hours. This same SB Branch man came back in but was very gentle in the course of questioning. He would have questioned me for two to three hours. He then left me again alone in the room – this time for about six hours. He returned when it was morning and told me that I was going back in for a few hours. I asked him where and he said, 'to the jail'. He brought me into a washroom and helped me to shave and have a general clean-up. I was then brought to a doctor. I complained to him of dizziness and pain in my right knee. He bandaged it and gave me an examination. Then I was photographed in the nude both front and rear. I was given my clothes back when I got back to the room. I changed and, after about an hour, I was brought now re-hooded to a Land-Rover and then after a short journey of five to ten minutes was put into a 'copter. After about an hour's flying journey we landed. Taken out. I know now that I was landed at the back of the prison (Girdwood). Marched through a hole in a wall. Across a football pitch and then put into a jeep. Driven to a gate – transferred into another police jeep and driven to the prison reception. I asked in the prison reception, where I was weighed etc., what day it was and he told me Tuesday. I said that it couldn't be since I was in Girdwood on Tuesday but he told me that that was a week ago. After going through the formalities of reception I was put into a cell in the basement where I was kept until the following morning when I was transferred to C wing amongst the other detainees. Whilst in the basement I was given a meal – the first substantial food I received in over a week.^[1]

It is worth noting that of the twelve men only Clarke physically resisted. After days of ill-treatment and goaded beyond control, he reacted with an attempt, albeit futile, to strike out at his captors and tormentors. Dr. Pearse O'Malley of the Mater Hospital, Belfast, who examined two of the 'guineapigs' while they were recovering in Crumlin jail from their ordeal, has explained^[2] how during the intensive sensory deprivation, as the disorientation is prolonged, aggression is likely to manifest itself. In the case of Joe Clarke this took the form of trying to retaliate, but in the case of at least two other men the aggression became inverted and they even attempted suicide, by throwing themselves head first at the water-pipes.

Another account of the eight days of fear and pain was given by Pat Shivers. Having had virtually no sleep for two nights at Magilligan, at 4.45 a.m. along with McClean, Montgomery and Donnelly he was taken from the hut. His account goes on:

Plain-clothes men beside us. Four blue bags produced and put over our heads. Short of breath because of bag. Then released from handcuffs which connected one to the others and hands handcuffed in front individually. Then run across field to 'copter. Landed, did not know where. Lorry backed up to 'copter. Taken out and thrown into back of lorry, like a sack of potatoes. Lorry smelt of cow dung. Driven in lorry for about 100 yards. Pulled out of lorry (bag still over head) marched into some sort of building. Stripped naked, examined by doctor. Bag still over head. Put lying on bed and examined. Army overalls (I later discovered) put on me, taken into room. Noise like compressed-air engine in room. Very loud, deafening.

Hands put against wall. Legs spread apart. Head pulled up by bag and backside pushed in. Stayed there for about four hours. Could no longer hold up arms. Fell down. Arms put up again. Hands hammered until circulation restored. This happened continually for twelve or fourteen hours, until I eventually collapsed. Thinking how that Paisley had seized power in some way and that I would be executed or tortured to death. Started to pray very hard. Mouth dried up. Couldn't get moisture in mouth. Pulse taken. Thought of a youngster who had died at six months old, started to pray that God would give me strength that I would not go insane. Fell down several times more. Slapped back up again. This must have gone on for two or three days; I lost track of time. No sleep. No food. Knew I had gone unconscious several times, but did not know for how long. One time I thought, or imagined, I had died. Could not see youngster's face but felt reconciled to death. Felt happy.

During this time no one word spoken at all. No words had been spoken since I left Magilligan. Bag still over my head. I did not speak – just prayed out loud. Noise all the time. After collapsing on final occasion, I felt somebody working my body up and down as if to revive me and restore circulation. Seemed to rise again and go against wall again, put my hands up.

I was dragged into a room by the bag over my head, and a voice in my ear asked me if I had anything to say. These were the first words since I left Magilligan – I reckoned about two or three days previous. Hands pushed against the wall until I collapsed again. Fell with face against wall. Fell against pipes at floor level. Pulled up again and threw face against wall until by body sore. Then arms out again, head well back and something like a ruler stuck into my back to force it straight.

Shoes slipped on at this stage. Then taken out and thrown into back of lorry. Half carried, half pulled out again. Heard noise of helicopter. Boarded again. Did not know how long helicopter stayed in the air. Can't recall. Could hear someone moaning beside me. Taken off helicopter into back of lorry. Very roughly handled.

Taken out of lorry by two or three men. Hunched and made to run over something like corrugated iron. Head beaten against wall. Brought into building. Sat in chair. Bag taken off head. First thing I saw was RUC officer – Head Constable, I thought from two stars on shoulder. Might be able to recognize him again, seemed to be plain-clothes secretary sitting behind him. Looked horrified when he saw me. Scum over my lips from lack of water and of thirst. Must have looked terrible. Read out paper. I know I looked terrible. Later found out it was a detention document. I tried to speak. Could only manage to whisper. 'Why did you do this to me?' Man behind me holding bag, pulled my hair back, said, 'Speak up. Can't hear you. I can't hear you,' I reached over for document to look at it. Eyes blurred, could not read it properly. Taken from me by man behind. Shoved it in my breast pocket. Bag pulled over my head again. I was pulled out at running pace. Run about fifty yards. Thrown into back of lorry again. Seemed to be police or military in the back. All punching me in neck and knee-caps. I could see what appeared to be Army or police boots by toe-caps. Got a heavy crack at side of face. Passed out.

When I came to I was in the helicopter again, heading I knew not where. Lorry backed up again. Taken into noisy room. Same room where I had been before. Same treatment. Hands up – feet apart. Getting weaker. Did not feel hungry now but had nothing to eat for many days. I had lost count of days. Hands hammered until blood came back again. Collapsed. Hands taken up loosely as I lay on the floor, let drop again to see if I was out.

Sat on backside in straight position with protruding pipe at floor level cutting into base of spine. Arms, legs and knees now numb and stiff.

Taken into room. Bag taken off head for second time. Detective of Special Branch there before me, with a cup of water sitting on the desk. Men who had taken bag off my head slipped out the door behind me. My voice was nearly gone.

Told me to take a drink of water. I drank a mouthful – my first in about four or five days.

Started asking questions. Could not answer. No voice and half hysterical. My lips sticking together with scum. He got angry and told me to speak up. Began asking questions about IRA activity and arms dumps around Toome. I did not know what he was talking about. I had no knowledge of anything. After about half an hour he said, 'I am going to send

you in there again,' which he did.

By this time I was at the end of my tether, my whole body, my arms, legs started to tremble uncontrollably. I passed out again. After this, the doctor wrapped me up in blankets. Carried me out to what appeared to be a small surgery. I lay there shivering and shaking. Took my pulse. Felt behind my ankles., Got excited, took some blood pressure twice by tourniquet method (belt around arm inflated with air). Put something in my mouth, I thought it was a drug and spat it out. The second time he said, 'Keep that in your mouth as I am only taking your temperature. He spoke with an English accent. Bag still half over my head. Could not see him. Now gave me mug of hot liquid. They held my mouth and forced it in. Taken into another room. Put lying on floor. Lay there. Started to sweat heavily. Dungarees became sticky. I could not sleep. My body was sore all over. Bag still over my head. I lay there for a long while. Can't recall. Then taken out. Marched around the room a few times and up a hallway. Taken into interrogation office, I discovered later.

A different Special Branch man interrogated me. Asking me about Civil Rights, Roddy McCorley Memorial Fund, Credit Union and my views about politics. Asked me who I voted for in the last Stormont election. Insisted I was connected with one of two IRA groups. Taken out again. Bag over my head and put into a cell. Sat there on ground. No furniture, no blankets. New appearance. Half slept, shivered from cold for some hours, can't recall exactly.

Detective came in again. Put bag over my head. Interrogated again. Some questions, my religion, took ages of all my children. My wife's name and address, where she was born, where I was born etc. Name and address of all my friends. Offered me a cigarette, I took it.

Put back into cell with mattress on the floor. Lay there for a while, taken out again and interrogated. Lost count of these interrogations. Perhaps four or five times. Same questions. According to Branch men, all my friends were in the IRA. At last interrogation, Branch man turned very nice. I told him I was going to see my own doctor because I had no faith in the doctor who would put me through all this agony. I thought at that time I was a physical wreck. Told me I could stay in cell with no bag on me, provided I lay with my head turned against wall – possibly so that I would not identify men who put bag over my head when they came again.

They offered me stew – meat and potatoes, which I refused. Asked me if I had a bad stomach. Then I was brought hot coffee which I took. One piece of bread and marmalade – which I took. Then he told me I would get a shave and clean up in the morning. I was going to Belfast prison which I did not mind. Could not sleep well. In the morning I was taken into a room. Got shaved, feet washed. Chalk marks washed off back of my hands. My feet and hands had been numbered when I was against wall. Hands, feet and back of dungarees had been marked. They seemed to have been changing these marks from time to time. Saw number four on back of hands. I think the soles of my feet were marked similarly. Now washed off. Shaved myself.

Taken out and into cell. Clothes brought in for my identification. Taken out and then brought in again. Put them on.

Took belt off me. My trousers would not stay up as they used to without the belt. Knew then I had lost weight.

I was told to walk up and down to get blood circulating in my body. I was very weak. Detective came in again and put bag over my head. Taken to see doctor and helper, told me to strip. Given full examination. Weighed me. To my amazement I weighed only 115 lb. I knew I was 128 lb. when I was arrested.

Went to put my clothes on. Detective said I had to go through another procedure. Took me naked into another room with a photographer with the detective standing beside me. Told me to turn around. Picture taken again. Clothes put on. Back to cell.

Bag over my head again. Lorry. 'Copter. Over an hour in the helicopter. Taken into police jeep. Taken through hole in wall. Taken to reception, weighed again. Doctor saw me that night. I asked what day it was. Tuesday. I had been eight days in custody.^[3]

It should be pointed out that, while some of the twelve 'guineapigs' were in the IRA, Shivers was not and never had been, a fact which even the local SB men in Toome, his hometown, recognized. On his eventual release, the local sergeant told him that he had no idea why he had been arrested in the first place.

Another completely innocent man, and one of the most articulate arrested, was Paddy Joe McClean, a remedial school teacher from Beragh, County Tyrone. McClean's was the first account of the SD experiment smuggled out to the ALJ. In it he told how at 4.45 a.m. on Wednesday 11 August

a hood was pulled over my head and I was handcuffed and subjected to verbal and personal abuse, which included the threat of being dropped from a helicopter which was in the air, being kicked and struck about the body with batons on the way.

After what seemed about one hour in the helicopter I was thrown from it and kicked and batoned into what I took to be a lorry. The lorry was driven only a couple of hundred yards to a building. On arriving there I was given a thorough

examination by a doctor. After this all my clothes were taken from me and I was given a boilersuit to wear which had no buttons and which was several sizes too big for me.

During all this time the hood was still over my head and the handcuffs were removed only at the time of the 'medical examination'.

I was then taken into what I can only guess was another room and was made to stand with my feet wide apart and my hands pressed against a wall. During all this time I could hear a low droning noise, which sounded to me like an electric saw or something of that nature. This continued for what I can only describe as an indefinite period of time. I stood there, arms against the wall, feet wide apart. My arms, legs, back and head began to ache. I perspired freely, the noise and the heat were terrible. My brain seemed ready to burst. What was going to happen to me? Was I alone? Are they coming to kill me? I wished to God they would, to end it. My circulation had stopped. I flexed my arms to start the blood moving. They struck me several times on the hands, ribs, kidneys and my knee-caps were kicked. My hood-covered head was banged against the wall.

As I have said this particular method of torture lasted for an indefinite period, but having consulted other men who suffered the same experiences I believe the period to have been about two days and nights.

During this time certain periods are blank – fatigue, mental and physical, overwhelmed me. I collapsed several times, only to be beaten and pulled to my feet again and once more pushed, spreadeagled against the wall. Food, water and the opportunity to relieve my bowels were denied me. I collapsed again.

I came to in what I believed to be Crumlin Road jail, having been pushed into a chair. The hood was removed and I was handed what I was told was a detention form. I was told to read it. My eyes burnt and were filled with pain; they would not focus and I couldn't read the form. I was thanking God that my ordeal was over. No more pain, now I could sleep. But no! The hood was pulled over my bursting head. I was roughly jerked to my feet and half pulled, half kicked and beaten for about 400 yards. This was the worst and most sustained beating to date. Fists, boots and batons crashed into my numbed body. someone else's – not mine. Hands behind my back, handcuffs biting into my wrists. Pain! Someone pulling and jerking my arms. Thrown headlong into a vehicle – soft seats, beating continued, boots, batons, fists. Then the noise, that dreaded helicopter again. Dragged out of the vehicle by the hair, thrown onto the floor of the helicopter. Blacked out.

Conscious again. Hands manacled in front of me. Pushed against a wall, legs wide apart. I dug my fingernails into the wall. Pain all over me.

Now that I can relax and think about it I can't find words to describe that pain. Without attempting to be melodramatic I think I can best describe it by saying I was enveloped in stretching, cramping pain.

My mind began to drift. I tried to sing to myself. I was going mad. I must already be mad to stick this.

Still standing rigid against the wall someone takes my pulse, sounds my bruised chest over my heart. Must be a doctor. Dragged along. Pushed into a chair. hood pulled off. Screaming, blinding light, questions fast and hard, couldn't speak.

'Spell your name.' Tried to find the letters, swimming in my brain – couldn't spell my name. I must be insane. More questions – blows, hair pulled. Still can't see well. A table – three men at it – all writing – blinding light.

I was told I would be given half an hour to rest and think. Then I would be asked more questions and if I didn't answer them I would be taken back to the music room' – the room with the noise – pain.

Sleep – deep, black sleep. Pulled to my feet. Back to the questions again. would not give answers. Back to 'music room. Feet wide apart, hands handcuffed – against the wall. Droning noise fills my head. By this time I could feel no pain. Just numb. Dragged away from the wall, legs buckled under me, fell to the floor. Dragged by the ankles up and down shallow steps. Didn't care – past feeling pain. Didn't have a body.

From now on it was interrogation – back to the 'music room' – some sleep. Then the first taste of water in – how many days? Some dry bread and more water.

We were given our first 'meal'. This consisted of a cup of watery stew which I had to eat using my fingers as utensils. The hood was lifted just enough to leave my mouth free. We were then allowed to the toilet for the first time since we arrived.

Punishment now eased off. Interrogation continued. Strict questioning – no beatings – just threats and personal insults. Food of a more substantial nature, still badly cooked and served, but at least it was regular.

The hood was taken off and I was allowed my first wash.

Now I was allowed to sleep, but the room was so cold that sleep was hard to come by. The fear of more beatings was still with me. I was terribly alone! They gave me one blanket – to keep me warm, they said.

I was then told it was 'all over' and that I was going to be interned in Crumlin Road jail. I didn't believe them – another trick, I thought. Still uneasy – still worried – still alone.

Hood still over my head, but treated better now. No questions, no beatings.

Journey to Crumlin Road jail by lorry, helicopter and Land Rover. I was still sane, still alive – thank God!^[4]

In many ways McClean is the most 'interesting' of the 'guineapigs' in that he was the one man who was able to figure out what was really going on and acted accordingly. After hours at the wall he decided on a policy of total non-cooperation. This meant going limp and collapsing. It also meant a lot of beatings as he was lifted against the wall, collapsed and was lifted again in a seemingly endless cycle. But, as McClean later said, 'we were getting beatings all the time anyway'. Eventually McClean was left alone on the floor for a time, only being hauled up to his feet when being dragged off to yet another interrogation. Later, however, he was hung by handcuffs on a hook on the wall on three occasions. His questioning was entirely political rather than military, and confirmed that the interrogators knew that he wasn't a member of either wing of the IRA. McClean was able to give details of his interrogators, who informed him that he was 'somewhere on the continent'. One of them even told him his name, doubtless false, and had a Ballymena accent, while another claimed to have come from Fivemiletown, though, McClean says, he had no local geographical knowledge.

McClean claims that his main mistake was to tell his interrogators that he knew what they were up to. This greatly annoyed them and made things worse for him in the short run. 'It is much better to adopt a policy of total non-cooperation and say nothing at all,' he says. 'Whether you are innocent, as I was, or guilty, it makes no difference. They weren't concerned on whether we were guilty or not – indeed they knew that some of us were completely innocent – they were concerned with our reactions to the extreme stress of Sensory Deprivation...^[5]

Micky Donnelly, aged 22, a bricklayer from Derry, gave, his story also on his arrival at Crumlin:

We were taken out at 4.00 a.m. into another hut where we were given sausages and beans which nobody could eat. We were then put back into the hut. After about an hour we were taken out, handcuffed and brought into another room. Two of us were handcuffed together. I complained to an RUC constable called Hood that the handcuffs were too tight, so he promptly took them off and put them on even tighter. I asked him if we were going to Rathlin Island, and he jeered back, 'Where you are going is worse than Rathlin.' Then the black hood was put over our heads. This hood was made double, i.e. two layers of cloth all around. There was no mouthpiece or sights in it. It was impossible to breathe through it, one had to suck air from below. It was reasonably loose on the shoulders. Initially it was a horrific sensation. I was at this time handcuffed myself – my two hands together. I was then led out and put into a helicopter. I was walked into the step up to the helicopter, banging my legs. From this point onwards I have no clue where I was until this hood was removed on the afternoon of Tuesday. 17th August.

Wednesday morning, 11 August, until Tuesday evening, 17 August:

During all this time I did not know where I was. I was led to believe by the Special Branch that I was in England. On being removed from Magilligan I would estimate that the helicopter journey lasted half an hour at the end of which journey I was taken out and transferred to a lorry. During this first helicopter ride there was no threatening or abuse. After a short lorry ride during which I was made to lie face downwards in the back with other men thrown on top of me, I was dragged in and out of this lorry and in the course of this dragging my arms, legs, and body and head were being banged against the lorry. On getting out of the lorry after a short journey I was led into a building. In this building the hood was held tight around my neck. All my clothes were removed and I was given a medical examination by a person whom I presume to be a doctor and who spoke with an English accent. After this medical I was given an Army overall to wear. It was too short for me. This was the only clothing that I had to wear until my own clothing was returned to me, shortly before I left on my last helicopter ride which took me, as I now know, eventually to Crumlin Road prison. After being given the overall I was taken outside the room and along a corridor into another room and made stand against the wall as one is made to do for frisking, only I was made to stretch my legs and arms as far apart as I could get them. My feet also had to be as far from the wall as possible.

I was made remain in this position for at least two and at most four days with the hood on. I lost all track of time, but there is no doubt that I remained in this position for days. If I did not keep my head straight I was hit with a fist on the small of the back to make me straighten up. If I did not keep my back rigid I was 'thumped' again in the small of the back. On occasions, not very often, I was struck on the genitals with a hard object and on other occasions a similar hard object was thrust into my arms. During the duration of this stance, to my knowledge I went unconscious at least four times. I do not know for how long I was out. On numerous occasions I fell flat from fatigue and physical exhaustion, due to my hands and arms becoming numb, painful and powerless. When this occurred I was lifted and feeling was beaten

back into my arms and hands and I was put back into my original position. As the duration of my stance against this wall grew longer, the collapsing and falling became more frequent, until eventually I must have been falling once every twenty minutes to thirty minutes. During all of this time against the wall I was fed bread and water, i.e., one slice of hard dry bread and half a cupful of water. This was taken by means of the hood being lifted up to the level of just above the mouth. This was fed to us by one of our captors. I would have been fed this on about six occasions in all.

A further factor which played particularly on the mind was the constant presence of a high-pitched hissing sound which seemed to have been 'piped' into the place where we were. After a period this really played on the mind and led eventually to a kind of illusion where I thought I heard someone singing familiar tunes. At times I sang along with them. I remember in particular singing 'Henry Joy'. Outside of this noise nothing else could be heard, except the groans and squeals of other men, I presume, who were undergoing some sort of physical anguish or mortal torture.

At the end of this period against the wall I was then taken away from the wall and asked if I would like to see a policeman. I replied that I did. I was taken away and I presume into another room where a voice said 'You wanted to see me? You asked to see me?' I said that I did and that I wanted to know why I was there. At this time the hood was held tightly against my neck by someone behind me. I also asked for my wife to be contacted. In reply to this they told me that I'd see nobody and that I'd never see her again. Having spoken to this man who was alleged to be an RUC man, I was let out, my shoes put on and I was thrown into a lorry. I was manhandled, thumped and punched all the way to the lorry and in it. I had been handcuffed again before being taken out. In the lorry other people were thrown on top of me. A hand was put over my mouth, the result being that I could not breathe and so I yelled. In reply to my yell, I was beaten about the head and face with what I presume to be fists. The next I knew was being put into a helicopter and taken away. I would have been half an hour at most in the 'copter. In the 'copter I overheard voices talking about 'throw him out'. Before I went into the 'copter I was asked if I could swim.

At any rate the 'copter landed again and I was removed and manhandled into a van. I was thrown onto the floor of this van. Whilst lying on the floor of this van the hood was pulled tightly around my neck and someone stood heavily on my handcuffed hands. After this I felt my wrists bleeding. After this journey in the van I was taken into a room where the hood was lifted up sufficient for a detention form to be thrust in front of my face by an RUC sergeant whom I had seen before at Magilligan before the hood was put on. After being shown this, the hood was put back on again and I was removed again and put back into the same van, I think, out of which I was taken and the van moved off again. During this van journey I was severely beaten with fists with concentration on my stomach and kidneys, chest and ribs. I was beaten unconscious. When I came round I was being dragged out of the van and along the ground. I was being dragged by the handcuffs. I was then put back into the helicopter. I was verging on the unconscious whilst in the helicopter and I cannot remember clearly anything about this trip in the 'copter. When the helicopter landed I was taken from it and put into a lorry, only this time I was thrown in on top of someone else. After this journey in the lorry which appeared short – a few minutes – I was put back into the room where the hissing noise was and where I was the long period prostrate against the wall. My shoes were again dragged off me. I was just then left to stand as before against the wall and the collapsing continued as before. At this stage I was fairly far gone and so I cannot recollect precisely how long I was against the wall on this occasion but I would say that it was for a good number of hours – perhaps twelve. At the end of this period I was again asked if I wished to speak to a policeman; I said I did, and so I was after a period of time brought to one, but all I asked him to do was to contact my wife. I was then led back against the wall again. By now I had lost all track of time, but the remainder of the time from now until I had the hood removed on Tuesday 17th, I was subjected to continuous interrogation by what I presume to be RUC Special Branch. In between interrogations I was put back against the wall and on other occasions I was just thrown into a room. I was suffering a great deal from the cold. I was so cold that I could not drink the water. In the course of the interrogations by the SB I was offered the odd cigarette. I was interrogated then at great length about the IRA both in Belfast and Derry. The interrogation was entirely concerning IRA activities and IRA men. I completely denied all knowledge of any complicity in any illegal activity. The interrogation was, on the whole, friendly. I was not beaten during it. The interrogation also covered a gamut extending from the influence of the RC Church in the troubles to Blaney, the Fianna Fáil TD [MP]. The Catholic Church, I was told, was responsible for the trouble. This interrogation would have extended over a period of a couple of days, at the end of which period I was again driven a short journey in a lorry and put into a helicopter and then the helicopter moved off. Before being taken on this journey I was washed up and shaved and photographed in the nude back and front. This last 'copter journey must have lasted at least one hour and at the end of the journey when the helicopter landed the hood was removed and I found myself in a lawn. I was marched through a hole in a wall past a football pitch and into what I now know to be Belfast prison. It was daylight and since it was my first time in daylight since Wednesday 11th, my eyes were dazzled and sore. Just before I left on this last 'copter journey I had got my clothes and my shoes back.

When I was first brought into the prison I did not know where I was and so I asked someone, I think a policeman, and he told me that I was in Salisbury jail. I then asked a warder where I was and he told me. He also told me what day it was –

Tuesday 17 August. On Tuesday in the prison I was given something to eat but was kept locked up alone in the cell until the following morning. I was not interrogated during this time.^[6]

In order to increase the men's sense of confusion and to increase their well-founded paranoia, most of them were told that they were 'in England', 'on the Continent', 'in the Hebrides' etc. Where in fact were they? We cannot be absolutely certain. The location of a torture centre is classified as an official secret by Her Britannic Majesty's Government. Neither the Compton Report nor the Parker Report reveal its location. Nonetheless, consensus of opinion points to Palace barracks, Holywood, a few miles outside Belfast. The *Sunday Times* Insight Team have stated this as a definite fact,^[7] and it is true that the two later SD victims William Shannon and David Rodgers were almost certainly subjected to the treatment at Holywood. If this is so, however, the Army appear to have gone to some considerable lengths to have concealed the location from the victims, to the extent of flying around to kill time, since each trip to the centre appears to have taken about thirty minutes, while a direct helicopter trip from the landing stripe at the back of Crumlin jail to Palace barracks, Holywood should take no more than ten minutes at most.^[8]

At any event, from the point of view of the British Army, this part of the operation was a 'success' – the men were really disorientated. Fear, hooding, the noise, cold, hunger, all led to trance-like states for all the men. Hallucinations began. One of the men described how he thought he was in a lighthouse, looking out to sea. Two sailors kept forcing him to look at the view. One of them kept 'standing at ease' and stamping on his left foot. (His left foot was in fact very swollen and several toe-nails had come off.) Finally he felt he couldn't stand it any more and turned on the sailor. Seizing his gun – a Colt 45, as used in all the best Westerns – he ran out of the lighthouse and up a mountain, pursued by hundreds of armed men. Reaching the top, he found he was trapped, and tried to commit suicide rather than fall into the sailors' hands again. He turned the gun onto his stomach and pulled the trigger. When he realized he wasn't dead he fired again. He felt that since he was dead, he must fall, so he collapsed. Awakening from the 'dream' he found himself being kicked awake as he lay on the floor. He was then lifted up and put against the wall. In his own words, 'I cried because I wasn't dead.'

Later, still up against the wall, he dreamt that he was at home and in bed. He could feel pain and the hood over his head was suffocating him. He couldn't reconcile the hood over his head with being at home, but finally puzzled it out, that the hood must be his blankets. He turned around and took the hood off – 'these aren't blankets', he said. He saw a huge Negro, dressed in a check shirt, a loose tie, grey flannels and baseball boots rushing at him. 'Sorry mister, I was dreaming,' he said, putting the hood back on and turning around to the wall again.

The same man is certain that he was four or five days and nights without sleep. 'I got a wee doze while diving to the floor,' he claimed, and 'I used to fall down so that they would kick me and get the circulation going again.'

Interrogation periods had to be prolonged at all cost. They generally occurred after he had collapsed, and he was dragged in. The longer he could prolong the conversation the better. The constant threat was 'back to the music room'. The bribe was 'a cigarette, a mattress and sleep'. Once he was offered a cigarette if he would tell his interrogators the names of any IRA men. He agreed, took the cigarette and managed to get three pulls on it before they took it out of his mouth and insisted that he fulfil his part of the 'bargain'. 'I stalled for almost a minute – it's not much, but even a minute out of the "music room" was worth it. Then I blurted out "Joe Cahill" and "Sean MacStiofain". "Get back in there, you cheeky bastard."'^[9]

Most of the others 'heard' music at one time or another during the days of wall-standing. Mickey Montgomery 'heard' Sousa marches and an Italian tenor singing. P. J. McClean heard protest poems, hymns and the death service being declaimed.

Montgomery overheard one of the interrogators say, as he was being led back to the wall, 'Your man thinks

he hears music,' and then laughter.^[10] Another 'heard' ferocious sermons about hell fire in the distinctive ranting voice of Ian Paisley.

These were all probably audio-hallucinations – no two men heard the same sounds apart from the white noise, but it is also possible that tape recordings were used to confuse and add to the disorientation.^[11]

Cold was also a factor used to weaken the men – an element that neither Compton nor Parker mentioned. All the men complained of cold – hardly surprising considering the barn-like structure of the holding room, with its concrete floor and the ill-fitting boilersuits which were their only garments, and, coupled with mental and physical exhaustion, the lack of warmth was certainly a factor contributing towards their collapse.

But nothing could last forever. Eventually, on the eighth day, as they have related, they were transferred back to Crumlin Road jail. In their exhausted state their chief emotion was that of overwhelming relief. They were not, then, to appreciate how serious the after-effects were to be. In Crumlin some spent the first two days in the prison hospital and some in the basement cells, where they were segregated from the rest of the detainees. There they met some of the men who, it was planned, were to be their successors. For while the twelve 'guineapigs' were going through their terrifying ordeal, a 'second eleven' was being carefully picked from among those detainees in Crumlin. Seven men – Sean Murphy, Billy Close, Angelo Morrelli, Dessie Crossan, Eamonn Kerr, Billy Reid and Peter Farran – were picked and removed to the basement.^[12] They, and the rest of the detainees, believed that this was because they were going to be the subjects of criminal charges. In fact they were not. They were intended as part of a follow-up experiment. In the event, plans for this were scrapped.

The reasons for this are still an official secret, but some grounds can be discerned. Most important of all was the secret visit to Edward Heath. The visitor was none other than Cardinal Conway, Archbishop of Armagh.

Since the initial internment swoop of 9 August, wives and relatives had of course frantically been trying to locate their men. By 13 August they had all been either released or located at Crumlin 'all or on Board HMS Maidstone – all, that is, except for the twelve 'guineapigs'. Officialdom was completely silent about their whereabouts. As frantic wives were fobbed off with one lie after another^[13] and ran from one jail to another they were aided by various social workers, MPs and priests. One of the most tireless of the latter was Father Denis Faul of Dungannon. Even he, however, made little headway in his search for the missing twelve. Then, on 17 August, news came. The men had all turned up at last in Crumlin. What was more, despite strict security one of them had managed to smuggle a detailed message out, giving an account of what the twelve had been through. The account got to Father Faul. After one look at it he went to his Archbishop.

Conway had doubtless read the accounts of brutality in the initial forty-eight hours which had been smuggled out and had started to appear in the *Irish News*, *Irish Times* and the *Tyrone Democrat* (who printed a special eight-page supplement on 19 August on the brutality). What he read in the smuggled message from Crumlin added a new dimension. Assured by Father Faul of the correspondent's veracity, he took the next plane to London.

His meeting with Heath was, and is to this day, secret but, obviously, enough was said to worry the Prime Minister. He, Lord Carrington, Reggie Maudling and Brian Faulkner were the men who ultimately had to bear the responsibility for Army and police behaviour. Labour MPs, admittedly keener, most of them, on embarrassing the Tory government than in demanding justice, were clamouring for the recall of Parliament. Heath refused to accede to this – hard-working MPs must be entitled to their four months a year holidays, after all – but clearly something would have to be done. And so the wheels were put in motion for yet another face-saving operation. On 31 August 1971 Reggie Maudling announced that he was appointing a committee to investigate allegations 'of physical brutality' by the 'security forces' during the initial forty-eight-hour detention period. Specifically excluded was all mention of mental cruelty. The committee was to be chaired

by Sir Edmund Compton.

They were not able to get away with this, however. On 17 October, as the committee was sitting, the *Sunday Times* at last published some of the statements of the 'guineapigs' with their allegations of SD torture. Along with the rest of the press the *Sunday Times* had been in possession of these papers for some weeks, having been given them by the Association for Legal Justice. They were, however, the first English newspaper to publish the allegations. Brian Faulkner immediately phoned Heath to state that the new charges were 'substantially without foundation', but to no avail. Carrington, Heath and Maudling had to see Harold Wilson and James Callaghan of the Labour Party the next day. Eighteen days later, Maudling wrote to Compton asking him slightly to expand his terms of reference. He could now include three further cases mentioned by the *Sunday Times*, Benard McGeary and Tony Rosato, both of whom had been released by then, and a third man – William Shannon.

Footnotes Chapter 4:

1. Statement in the files of the ALJ.
2. From a private interview with the author.
3. *ibid.*
4. Statement in the files of the ALJ.
5. From an interview with the author.
6. Statement in the files of the ALJ.
7. *Ulster*, (Penguin, 1972). p. 291.
8. In *The Times* of 14 January 1974 Trevor Fisk stated categorically that neither Palace nor Girdwood barracks was the SD torture centre. He gave no evidence for the statement nor claimed any alternative venue to be the centre. However at Stavanger in May 1974. it was finally admitted that Palace barracks had indeed been the site.
9. From an interview with the author.
10. *ibid.*
11. It is worth noting that in Brazil the many tortures used by the regime include audiovisual techniques. According to Mr. Georges Pinet, a Parisian lawyer, victims have been subjected to 'unbearable noises such as the sound of jet engines, screams of terror, deafening and nerve-shattering music and flashing lights combined with thirst, cold and hunger to create delirium. Then while the victim is under the illusion of fantasies resulting from this delirium, a vision of water is offered him, and a feminine voice suggests that his thirst will be satisfied if he confesses or signs a declaration.' (Pinet Report, 15-22 July 1972. Obtainable from Amnesty International, London.)
12. Peter Farran from Ardoyne was blind. While in the basement they were in the jurisdiction of the Army and the RUC, not the prison service, as the Governor Albert Mullan was at pains to point out to them. While held in the basement they were frequently interrogated and threatened with 'the horror treatment' – which was unspecified. After six days, however, they were moved back into the yard with the rest of the detainees. The blind man, Peter Farran, was released.
13. Mrs. Shivers of Toome for example, was given a phone number to ring by the Army at Palace barracks. It turned out to be the number of Ian Paisley's 'Dial a Prayer'.

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Irish Resistance Books

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 5 The Compton Report

'Future history books, whether of government or the music hall should reserve at least a footnote for mention of Sir Edmund [Compton]'s report... His commission afforded a perfect parallel to the blind men examining the elephant.'^[1]

The passage above, while correctly pointing out the glaring inadequacies of the Compton Report is, nevertheless, too kind. Compton was a little man, a government hack who was used shamelessly by the Conservative government in an effort to take the heat out of the torture allegations, while at the same time ensuring that enough of the facts about the torture would be known to scare anyone who dared to oppose the physical might of the Army. Even taken in relation to previous government whitewashes, like the Bowen Report, the report is manifestly ridiculous, but it does provide, from the government point of view, a diversion, a smokescreen. It was almost certainly deliberately designed to have in it glaring absurdities – such as the 'definition' of brutality in para. 106 – in order that the public, and the press in particular, would have their attention drawn to these lunacies and decide that the report, although an obvious whitewash, was designed to try to cover up ordinary brutality.

As soon as the report appeared in November many people, not least the 'liberal' press, derived the satisfaction of scoring easy points off the report and ridiculing Sir Edmund Compton and his colleagues.^[2] This may have personally 'hurt' Sir Edmund (although if the journalists involved didn't derive any lasting pleasure from their hatchet-jobs he cannot accuse them of 'brutality') but it doubtless delighted the Army and the senior Tory ministers who were in the know.^[3] For the truth is that, after the report, people were only talking in terms of an incompetent whitewash and not in terms of a successful government operation to hush up a carefully thought out, albeit unsuccessful, torture experiment performed by Army intelligence operators.

But to the report itself. Its 'constitution' was, even by British standards, absurd. The British government has a long tradition of reports and inquiries, one of the most recent and 'inadequate' being the Denning report on the Profumo affair. Following this fiasco, the English Royal Commission of Tribunals under Lord Justice Salmon, the eminent High Court judge, made specific recommendations in an attempt to ensure that future tribunals would not appear so farcical to the general public. As I have pointed out elsewhere,^[4] the Compton Report failed in at least seven ways to comply with even the basic recommendations of Lord Justice Salmon.

1. Salmon had recommended that all future inquiries be conducted in public in order that the public could have confidence and justice 'could be seen to be done'. Compton sat in secret.

2. Salmon recommended that the chairman of the committee should be 'a person holding high judicial office'. Compton was not, and never had been, such a person. He was a Unionist functionary who had served as a supposed 'ombudsman'.

3. Salmon recommended that the other members of the committee be appointed by the head of the judiciary, in order to avoid any appearance of political bias. Gibson and Fay were appointed by Reginald

Maudling, the Secretary of State for the Home Office (and close friend and business acquaintance of well-known bankrupt John Poulson and of Jerry Hoffman, international swindler and jailbird).

4. Salmon recommended that none of the committee members 'should have any close connection with any political party'. As the former 'ombudsman' Sir Edmund had very close 'connections' with the Unionist party.

5. Again, ignoring Salmon's recommendations, the committee was not vested with power to compel the attendance of witnesses.

6. Again, contrary to Salmon, the committee had no power to demand the production of documents – such as medical reports, police duty books etc.

7. The detainees, all of whom had been illegally arrested, were denied legal aid of any kind. (After a public and professional outcry they were eventually allowed a lawyer, but he was barred from even seeing, let alone hearing or questioning, the defence witnesses, while all police and Army witnesses were legally represented.)

In fact Compton saw only one 'complainant' and received written evidence from another. As opposed to this he admits (para. 18) to hearing ninety-five Army witnesses, twenty-six police witnesses, eleven prison officers, five regimental medical officers, two medical staff officers, two civilian doctors and two specialists, one from a military and one from a civilian hospital, as well as receiving from their secretaries written evidence from a further ten prison officers and one police officer.^[5] The refusal of the other 340 detainees to have anything to do with the committee which they regarded, rightly or wrongly, as being composed of government lackeys did not, Compton claims, 'frustrate our inquiry since material for our investigations has been made available to us in the form of allegations published in the press and transmitted to us from a number of other sources'. (In fact 'the press' turns out to be only the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Sunday Times*, as para. 11 somewhat shamefacedly admits.) It is interesting to read what Lord Justice Salmon had to say on this point: 'A tribunal should not base any finding on comment, on anything save the evidence given before it at a hearing.' (Compton moreover refused to hear evidence from such organizations as Amnesty International or the Association for Legal Justice.) Ignoring all this, Compton even attempted to use it as a factor in favour of the Army and police. In para. 24 he states: 'We have indeed been able to test the Army and police witnesses by so examining them and to form a view of their credibility, with or without the corroboration of documentary evidence.'

Salmon stated that

the public may be left with the feeling that the inquiry, if behind closed doors, is no more than what is sometimes referred to as 'the usual whitewashing exercise' – the odds against any such tribunal being able to establish the truth, if the truth is black, are very heavy indeed. Any government which in the future adopts this procedure will lay itself open to the suspicion that it wishes the truth to be hidden from the light of day.

Prophetic words. Compton however has a ready 'answer'. In para. 22 he emphasizes that in his and his henchmen's view, their ability to reach conclusions was

not impaired by the fact that we heard evidence in private. It has been open both to complainants and to those complained against to be legally represented. No complainant availed himself of this facility, though we were assisted by the legal representatives of army and police witnesses. Nor have we felt the need for powers to compel the attendance of witnesses and production of documents, as far as the army and police evidence is concerned.

Too much space could easily be taken up by pointing out the callous absurdities of Compton, but it is particularly instructive to look at paras. 43-105 inclusive, the paragraphs which deal with the 'guineapigs'.

Firstly, although Compton and his fellow 'investigators' had, they claim, the 'active assistance' of no fewer than 154 Army and police personnel plus Messrs Creaney, Macartney and Smith of the Northern Ireland bar, as well as, according to the *Sunday Times* Insight Team,^[6] a Home Office official and a Whitehall lawyer,

they were unable even to do their sums correctly. They list eleven men as having undergone the 'intensive interrogation' process, omitting Micky Montgomery from their report. Yet even a simple perusal of Army records should surely have shown that Montgomery was subjected to exactly the same arrest and torture processes as P.J. McClean, Pat Shivers and Micky Donnelly, first at the PCP (Prisoner Collection Point), then at the RHC (Regional Holding Centre) and finally at the secret torture centre. Moreover, as Compton was in the process of 'investigating' the treatment meted out to the twelve men – or eleven as he claimed – a further two 'guineapigs', William Shannon and David Rodgers, were being subjected to the same treatment not ten miles away from the luxury Conway Hotel where Sir Edmund and his colleagues took their ease. So much for 'intensive inquiries'.

Compton's 'explanation' of the 'interrogation in depth' makes incredible reading – but only if one supposes that it was intended to be taken seriously. He begins by reprinting the Bowen recommendations^[7] and goes on to 'explain' that

information can be obtained more rapidly if the person being interrogated is subjected to strict discipline and isolation, with a restricted diet; but violence or humiliating treatment, as explained above, are forbidden. Equally any person undergoing interrogation must be assured of security against either violent treatment by his fellow detainees or recognition by them; the evidence of IRA vengeance against informers underlines the importance of this safeguard. [Para. 46]

It must have been a real comfort to the 'guineapigs' to know that they were (a) being tortured for their own good, and (b) not being subjected to violence or humiliating treatment.

Compton then goes on to 'explain' the various elements of 'interrogation in depth', never once, however, explaining that, taken together, they constitute very severe sensory deprivation. In para. 48 he comments on wall-standing – the classic NKVD 'Stoika'.

Requiring detainees to stand with their arms against a wall *but not in a position of stress*^[8] provides security for detainees and guards against physical violence during the reception and search period and whenever detainees are together outside their own rooms in a holding room awaiting interrogation. It also assists the interrogation process by imposing discipline. Although the security need for this technique could be reduced by an increase of staff sufficient to provide for the separate custody of each individual while in transit between his own room and the interrogation room, there would be increased risk of physical contact between detainees and guards.

This last sentence is virtually incomprehensible, containing as it does such contradictions. The passage as a whole is apparently asking us to believe that wall-standing is in the victims' interests. The claim that the wall-standing was not a 'stress posture' is rather contradicted in para. 62, where Compton went on to admit that 'detainees attempting to rest or sleep by propping their heads against the wall were prevented from doing so... The staff were instructed, for example, to part legs not by kicking or hacking them but by pushing them outwards with the inner calf of their own legs.' He hastily goes on to add that 'no one was batoned to make him stay against the wall or was otherwise beaten whilst in this position'. All the men alleged beatings to force them to stand against the wall, but Compton finds this hard to believe because 'the guards had been specially trained to handle the detainees by methods which avoided violence or physical damage' (para. 63). He is therefore at a loss to account for the bruising, black eyes and abrasions reported, and assumes that they must all have been 'accidental'. In an incredible statement (para. 80) he adds that 'we were told that in a number of instances as a result of maintaining the required posture for a considerable period^[9] the interrogatee would find his hands and arms had become numb. In such cases the guards would rub the hands or swing the arms of the interrogatee to restore feeling.' A touching picture of solicitousness which few, other than Sir Edmund and Co., may find credible.

Next comes another of Compton's monumental 'errors'. In para. 53 he claims that he and his team of skilled investigators 'have had unrestricted access to all the records made at the time, and taken evidence

from the persons who supervised the operation'. To most people this would seem to be either an attempt at jesuitical semantics or a lie. As pointed out previously, he couldn't even get the number of 'guineapigs' right, but in addition to this, when we come to the supposed number of hours of wall-standing to which each detainee was subjected, glaring discrepancies appear. Compton states (para. 64):

From our inspection of the records kept at the time of this operation ... the men were at the wall for periods totalling as follows:

Mr Auld	43½ hours
Mr Clarke	40 hours
Mr Donnelly	9 hours
Mr Hannaway	20 hours
Mr McClean	29 hours
Mr McGuigan	14 hours
Mr McKerna	30 hours
Mr McKerr	15 hours
Mr McNally	13 hours
Mr Shivers	23 hours
Mr Turley	9 hours ^[10]

Subsequently press men and doctors have pointed out the extreme severity of this, noting how victims of the NKVD had 'broken' after less than a day of just wall-standing, let alone hooding, brutality, white noise, no sleep, inadequate diet etc. (Indeed, on the BBC TV programme 'The Burke Special', two volunteers from the audience gave up after less than *five minutes* of wall-standing, hooding, white noise and tactile deprivation.) But all the men interviewed insisted that they had had to stand against the wall for many hours more than those indicated by Sir Edmund. Admittedly, after twenty-four hours of such severe SD one's sense of time becomes very distorted and civilian experiments have shown that estimates of elapsed time by volunteers in SD experiments become increasingly inaccurate. Nonetheless, those interviewed were adamant that they had been up against the wall for considerably longer than alleged. In fact, they had. In March 1972, in his minority report to the Parker Committee, Lord Gardiner let the cat out of the bag. In paras. 7(a) and 7(b) he states:

While records were kept of the movements of the detainees for the 11th, 12th and 13th of August, the records for most of them were discontinued some time on the 14th or 15th and for four on the 16th... the report does not indicate how long any detainee was standing continuously at the wall.^[11] We have seen copies of the *partial records*. [My emphasis – J.M.] They show that, subject to breaks for bread and water and for toilet visits, some detainees were standing continuously at the wall for periods of 6, 6, 7, 7, 7, 7, 7, 8, 9, 9, 9, 9, 9, 9, 9, 9, 9, 9, 9, 9, 10, 10, 10, 10, 11, 12, 13, 15, and 16 hours.

Next, the question of weight loss. Compton merely records briefly (para. 68) that 'the records kept by the doctor for each detainee entering and leaving the centre all show loss of weight during the time spent there'. Earlier (para. 51), he had stated that 'a diet of bread and water at six-hourly intervals may form part of the atmosphere of discipline imposed upon detainees while under control for the purposes of interrogation'. But he claims (in para. 55) that he examined the entry medical record,

written by the doctor when he examined each detainee on entry into the centre on the 11th August. The purpose of this examination was for the doctor to certify whether the detainee was fit for interrogation: we have confirmed that before he did so he was briefed as to the conditions that the interrogatee would experience. The patient was stripped and examined, his medical history and present state of health ascertained and recorded, with notes of the patient's weight and the existence

or otherwise of cuts, bruises or other bodily damage.

In the previous paragraph Compton quotes the doctor involved as having told them that those in charge of the centre

had impressed him with their concern to avoid physical injuries to their charges and had given him every support in allowing him to exercise his professional duties. We put on record that both in his actions as recorded and by his evidence given to us, this officer satisfied us as having maintained the standards of the medical profession to which he belongs.^[12]

After this mutual orgy of self-congratulation it may come as a surprise to learn that this anonymous credit to the medical profession, who among other things couldn't even diagnose a peptic ulcer in the case of P.J. McClean or Reynaud's disease in the case of Kevin Hannaway, didn't even have a weighing machine to record the men's weight. Compton, of course, despite his access to all the 'records' doesn't mention this and it is left, again, to Lord Gardiner to admit (para. 7(c)) that 'there was no weighing machine when the 11 [*sic*] men arrived and the recorded entry weights were mere estimates made by the doctor looking at the man. On the *assumed* weights there were weight losses up to 1 stone 2 lb. in six days.' So much for the 'records'. As for the severe weight loss – in fact all men reported losing *at least* one stone in weight in the six days – despite this Compton still 'finds it difficult to give credence to the far more serious allegations by some detainees that they were denied food and water for long periods, and think it was they who failed to take such food and drink as was offered them' (para. 96).

Next, Compton attempts to explain away the hooding – one of the most severe SD techniques which by itself can cause prolonged disorientation and hallucinations. He admits that the hooding did take place, from 11 to 17 August. His justification for it can most charitably be described as 'bizarre'. In para. 49 he states: 'The hood (a black pillow-slip which the detainee is not required to wear while he is being interrogated or while he is alone in his room)^[13] reduces to the minimum the possibility that while he is in transit or with the other detainees he will be identified or will be able to identify other persons or the location to which he is moved. It thus provides security for the detainee and for his guards.' Again, Compton discovers tender solicitousness for the welfare of men whom the Army must have believed to be their sworn enemies, for surely they couldn't arrest an innocent man? Compton does go on to add reluctantly, however, that hooding 'can also, in the case of some detainees, increase their sense of isolation and so be helpful to the interrogator thereafter'. In his conclusions (para. 93) Compton further admits that as regards hooding 'the general allegations are substantiated, and we consider that they constituted physical ill-treatment'. Nonetheless the serious nature of hooding is constantly played down. No mention of SD is made. Indeed, Compton even implies that some of the 'guineapigs' rather enjoyed the hooding – in para. 59 he states 'we were told that in fact some complainants kept their hoods on when they could have removed them if they wished'.^[14] Thus hooding is dismissed as being basically in the victim's best interests and of little or no harm to him, for according to Compton only 'some' people are likely to be affected by this treatment. The definite, proven, long-term effects are not even mentioned.

Similarly with 'white noise'. Compton claims (para. 50) that the continuous noise to which the men were subjected prevented them from either overhearing each other or being overheard and is 'thus a further security measure'. It is nothing of the sort! It is a particularly dangerous technique which, used in conjunction with the other techniques, induces total disorientation. In a throwaway line Compton adds that 'the extraneous noise ... may enhance the detainee's sense of isolation'. Even Lord Gardiner, a pillar of the establishment, was moved to comment in his minority report (para. 8) that 'we have received unchallenged medical evidence that subjection to a noise level of 85 decibels (at the interrogation centre it was 85 to 87 decibels) for 48 hours might result for 8 per cent in temporary loss of hearing'. Leaving aside the fact that the

men were subjected to the 'white noise' for considerably more than forty-eight hours, it is instructive to note that none of them had their ear-drums examined by the dedicated doctor at the centre.

With regard to sleep deprivation Compton blandly records (para. 66): 'It was confirmed that it was the general policy to deprive the men of opportunity to sleep during the early days of the operation'. Compton's inventiveness seems to be flagging here – even Homer is reported to have nodded – and he can offer no explanation as to how this illegal act was really in the victim's interest. Similarly he gives no explanation as to why the men had to wear over-large, floppy boilersuits.

As to physical brutality, Compton is at a loss to account for any injuries received. Did not the officers in charge and the good doctor assure him that they would never have countenanced any such infringements of their 'rules'? And yet eight men had the temerity to complain that they had been kicked, punched, jumped on, kneed and physically beaten up – and that didn't even include allegations from Francis McGuigan, which Compton didn't receive from the *Sunday Times*, or Micky Montgomery, who apparently didn't exist. It is exceedingly difficult to understand how men can be forced to stand hooded against a wall and prevented from going to sleep without some violence being committed against them, and the best Compton can do is to record (para. 97): 'We make no findings under this head, for there is a conflict that we cannot resolve between the allegations and the denials that have been made to us by the supervising staff who controlled the proceedings and saw what took place.' Lest the security forces felt that this could in any way be taken as casting a shadow of doubt over their veracity Sir Edmund hastily adds that 'while it cannot be regarded as conclusive, account must be taken of the evidence adduced in support of these denials) consisting of the special training given to the guards to handle detainees by methods which avoided violence or physical damage, and the constant supervision exercised over the operation to ensure that these methods were used in practice'. A less 'gullible' person than Sir Edmund and his colleagues might assume that it was possible that the 'special training' given to the guards was in how to beat people up without leaving too much tell-tale bruising and scarring, and that it would be unlikely that any of the guards, officers or the doctor who had taken part in this disgraceful and illegal experiment would admit it.

As for Joe Clarke, who suffered some of the worst violence, Compton records (para. 100):

It is confirmed that the handling of him was more forcible because of his active resistance. The particular injury for which we have evidence is the effusion on his knee which occurred between the two visits made by the doctor at 11.30 and 17.20 on the 13th August. We have not been able to ascertain how this happened but we are satisfied that the treatment given to it in the centre was correct, that he was kept under medical supervision and that this treatment was continued after admission to Crumlin Jail. *We are not disposed to find* that he suffered ill-treatment over and above the ill-treatment that he suffered in common with the other complainants. [My emphasis – J.M.]

For the rest,

Mr McClean's specific allegations of physical assault are denied by those who supervised the 11th-17th August operation. Their denial is confirmed by the evidence of the medical officer who visited him regularly during his six ^[15] days in the centre. The medical officer's exit certificate of the 17th August records 'Bruising right shoulder and both legs' which was not present on his entry certificate on the 11th August. But the medical officer had emphasised to us that these bruises were superficial, and, he thinks, consistent with the handling required to move Mr McClean who on account of his limp resistance had to be carried about the centre. The further injuries to Mr McClean mentioned in the 18th August medical records from Crumlin Jail, 'Black eye left, contusions arms and chest', are not, we think, due to action in the centre but must have been suffered by Mr McClean in transit by lorry and helicopter from the centre to Crumlin Jail. Our inquiries have failed to establish when and how this damage took place. Mr McClean himself makes no allegations of ill-treatment during his transit and it would therefore appear that the injuries were accidental.

This is one of the most blatant lies in Compton's pages. McClean was the first man to smuggle an account of what had happened out of Crumlin Road jail and the *Sunday Times* had given it to Compton himself. In it McClean gives comprehensive details of the numerous assaults made on him, both in transit and at the

holding centre. The simple fact about the injuries which the doctor at Crumlin recorded is that they occurred at the centre and the conscientious doctor there ignored them when making out the exit certificate. Poor liaison with the Crumlin medical authorities meant that the second set of records were not suitably 'doctored' in McClean's case, although they were in the case of other men. Compton ends his summary of the brutality by stating (para. 102) that the injuries recorded at Crumlin for Kevin Hannaway must have been accidental also, because the doctor at the holding centre hadn't noticed them.

Finally we have Compton's apparently most fatuous statement of all – the by now infamous para. 105:

Where we have concluded that physical ill-treatment took place, we are not making a finding of brutality on the part of those who handled these complainants. We consider that brutality is an inhuman or savage form of cruelty, and that cruelty implies a disposition to inflict suffering, coupled with indifference to, or pleasure in, the victim's pain. We do not think that happened here.

Even Lord Gardiner could not forbear from commenting:

Lest by silence I should be thought to have accepted this remarkable definition, I must say that I cannot agree with it. Under this definition, which some of our witnesses thought came from the Inquisition, if an interrogator believed, to his great regret, that it was necessary for him to cut off the fingers of a detainee one by one to get the required information out of him for the sole purpose of saving life, this would not be cruel and, because not cruel, not brutal.^[16]

But this was the whole point of the Compton Report. Any intellectual credibility that Sir Edmund might once have had could be sacrificed. The press could castigate him and talk about 'whitewashes' but the essential purpose was served. A smokescreen was drawn across the experimental nature of the SD techniques. People could now, if they felt so inclined, believe that the British had brutally mistreated suspects, and a few liberals in England might stir their sluggish consciences, but the vast majority of Englishmen would soon forget about it under a barrage of anti-Irish propaganda which the press would put out. Government ministers like Lord Carrington would still apparently be able to get away with stating on the radio that 'all detainees were murderers', despite the fact that of the first 1,576 men arrested, 934 had by mid-December 1971 been released. And no one would bother to question why the SD experiment had been carried out, who had authorized it and what permanent effects the victims would suffer.^[17]

Footnotes Chapter 5:

1. Nicholas Wade, in *Science*, 176 (1972), pp. 1102-5.
2. see, for example, the *Observer* of 21 November 1971: 'Six grains of truth and a bucket of whitewash'.
3. The Labour opposition do not appear to have been too worried, either. Denis Healey, for example, was only concerned that, as the minister responsible in 1967 for the operation of the Joint Directive on Military Interrogation in Internal Security Operations' Overseas, he was not blamed. Apparently Belfast, which Mr Faulkner so frequently assures us is 'as British as Birmingham or Bradford', is reckoned by the Army to be 'overseas', thus ascribing to the St George's Channel ocean status for the first time.
4. In [J. McGuffin, *Internment*](#) (Anvil Press, Tralee, 1973), pp. 128-9.
5. The 'accused' Army and RUC personnel had the benefit of the representation of three well-known Ulster Unionist legal figures, Messrs J. Creaney, R. Macartney and P. Smith, who were, according to Sir Edmund, 'of great assistance to the Enquiry' (para. 18).
6. Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster* (Penguin, 1972), p. 291.
7. Cmnd. 3165 (HMSO, 1966).
8. Surely this inaccuracy is more likely to be deliberate than unconscious.

9. Unspecified, although earlier Compton had claimed, erroneously as we will see, that it never exceeded six hours 'at a stretch' [*sic*].
10. Again no mention of Micky Montgomery.
11. In fact Compton does claim that no one was at the wall for longer than 4-6 hours at a time.
12. Others may agree with Fr Denis Faul, who called for the anonymous doctor's dismissal from the medical profession. (see *British Army and Special Branch RUC Brutalities*.) To refresh the memory of the absent-minded and apparently myopic doctor at the torture centre, I quote from the Oath of Hippocrates: 'I will abstain from all intentional wrongdoing and harm, especially from abusing the bodies of man or woman, bond or free.' More recently the Third General Assembly of the World Medical Association in London, October 1949, outlined the ethical principle which they felt should apply to all members of the profession: 'Under no circumstances is a doctor permitted to do anything that would weaken the physical or mental resistance of a human being.'
13. By and large it is pretty difficult to interrogate someone when they have a tight hood over their head! Hence the occasional removal of it when the victim was required to speak. Compton frequently refers to the prisoners' 'rooms': it may be a small point, but these are generally called cells. In any case, most of the men didn't see even a cell until they had been four days at the wall.
14. see [Chapter 4](#), however, for an account of what happened to you if you tried.
15. In fact seven, but then Compton isn't very good with figures.
16. The Minority Report of Lord Gardiner is found in the Parker Report, Cmnd. 4901 (HMSO, 1972). This quotation is from para. 7D.
17. A bizarre, albeit ludicrous, tailpiece to the Compton Report occurred in May 1974 at Stavanger in Norway. British defence witnesses were giving 'evidence' at the European Commission of Human Rights when one 'well-known RUC Branch man' proceeded to deny the findings of the government's own Compton Report. 'There was no white noise,' he apparently told bemused commissioners. The noise had come 'unavoidably from a near-by aircraft factory'. (see *Irish Times*, 6 May 1974.) It is distressing to learn that, according to this officer, Messrs Short Brothers, Northern Ireland's only aircraft factory, have for over thirty years been torturing not only their workers but the entire population of East Belfast! It is true, however, that the factory is opposite Palace barracks.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 6 Replay

While the members of the Compton Committee were deliberating in the luxurious surroundings of the Conway Hotel, the Army Intelligence Squad and the RUC Special Branch were not idle either. While some of their members were giving evidence about SD to the Committee others were at work at the secret interrogation centre – in this case almost certainly Palace barracks, Holywood. Another two subjects had been selected for experimentation.

The first was William Shannon, aged 24, from the St. James's area of Belfast. Shannon came from a staunchly Republican background. His father and uncle had both been detained and then interned in the original August 1971 swoop. The Shannon family had been constantly harassed by the troops ever since. At 11.30 p.m. on Saturday 9 October 1971 Shannon was walking home. As he neared his street an Army patrol jumped out of a driveway. Shannon, in his own words, panicked and ran. Two shots were fired at him, both narrowly missing. He was captured and taken in custody to Springfield Road police barracks. He was unarmed and had no incriminating documents on him. No charges were preferred against him nor was he informed why he had been arrested. Instead, after an hour, he was taken to Girdwood barracks, at the back of Crumlin Road jail, in an armoured car. After half an hour there he was again transferred, this time to Palace barracks, Holywood. What follows is his account of what happened next.

I was in Holywood military barracks till Monday evening. I was interrogated by a member of the Special Branch. I was spreadeagled against the wall. My feet were kicked from under me. I was made to count the holes on a wall, a section of which appeared to be made of pegboard material. I told him there were twenty-three spots. He said I was wrong and I got a thumping.

I was threatened with a truth drug. He took my coat off. He had a syringe his hand. He asked me had I any illnesses. I told him I had an ulcer. He then remarked, 'Maybe it's well not', meaning not to inject the truth drug. I could state that he had the needle up to my arm and was about to inject it. He kept punching me on the head and on the shoulders and back, as well as in the sides and in the back of the neck. This happened over a period of approximately one hour and a half. He then sent me into a room with a lot of other fellows. I was made to sit facing the wall. Periodically from Sunday to Monday afternoon I was pulled out of the room and back into the first room. On Sunday morning I, with others, was made clean the whole place out.

Interrogation continued on and off all day Sunday. At one stage I was put into a room with my face against the wall. A shot was fired. It sizzled past my ear and either lodged in the wall or went right through it, I am not sure which. There were several police outside and they all had a good laugh at this. In a room off this room which had cubicles in it, about six policemen kept taking out their guns, emptying them and pulling the trigger. They were in uniform. All this carry-on went on until Monday.

I got a couple of hours' sleep on Sunday night. On Monday morning the interrogation commenced again by two young Special Branch officers. Again I was spreadeagled. Continual interrogation. I was put back into a cubicle. I was always made to face the wall and not allowed to look around me. I was beaten three or four times by a police officer in uniform who had some sort of a plastic hose. He was not satisfied as to how quick we were cleaning up the place.

On the following Monday I was taken to Crumlin Road prison. I was there no more than ten minutes and then taken Out again. I do not know where I was taken to after that. I remember going down the inside of the jail. My coat was taken off and wrapped round my head. I was heaved out of a tender for about fifteen minutes. I do not know where. I was put into a helicopter. The engines roared and it lifted but I do not know whether it actually took off or not. There were two Special Branch men. I appeared to be in the helicopter for about twenty to thirty minutes.

The helicopter then landed. I had the coat still on my head. I was thrown out onto the ground as soon as it landed. This appeared to be quite a drop of about three or four feet. I was then put into what I think was an Army lorry, the coat still round my head. The lorry drove off and I appeared to be about ten minutes in it. I was taken out of the lorry and put into a room.

A doctor took the coat off my head. This was a square room with no windows. I was told to strip completely and was examined. I think he was an Army doctor. He appeared to be very English.

I was then taken into another room. I do not know where this was – still undressed – the bag was over my head again and I was put against the wall. The bag was then pulled off and I was photographed. I was made to turn round and the number '21' was drawn in blue on the back of both my hands. ^[1]

The bag was then taken off again and I was given a pair of overalls. I put them on. I was then taken away. There was then more interrogation. I do not know where I was. I was made to stand for hours at a time, spreadeagled.

At one stage I was taken out into a garden. I had the overalls on me and there was only one button and the bag over my head. There was a man at each side of me and they dragged and made me run all over the garden. This was taken in relays by the two men and lasted for about half an hour. I was then taken inside again against the wall and spreadeagled again. This was all on Monday but I do not know where.

The bag was taken off my head three times during interrogation. I did not recognize any of the men at this stage. My feet were very badly bruised.

On quite a few occasions during this interrogation a gun was put at the back of my head and the trigger pulled. From Monday I lost all conception of time.

I had no shoes or socks on me, only the overall. On the same day I was put into a room with a fantastic noise like steam hissing through a pipe. I was completely disorientated from this until the following Monday.

I had nothing to eat for, I reckon, four days except a cup of water and one round of dry bread each time. I got asleep after three days. This went on and on. I had no idea where I was. I lost all track of time. The noise of steam was varying – roaring at times and then it would calm down and then roar up again. At one stage I was completely exhausted.

I was taken outside – I do not know where. I was put against a rough brick wall. The overall which had only one button was pulled open. The bag was still over my head and I was rubbed against the wall.

When eating the dry bread and drinking the water I was allowed to lift the bag up as far as my nose and no more. I got my first meal on 16 October and I got my first wash on Monday, 18 October.

I arrived at Crumlin Road prison at 1 p.m. that Monday. I have no idea where I was. I was taken out in the morning, with a bag over my head and put into a helicopter.

The journey by helicopter appeared to be about half an hour, i.e. the helicopter journey when I was taken to Girdwood Park. During the flight I heard someone with an English accent say that they had to stop to re-fuel before they crossed the sea. The helicopter came down and then took off again.

I was taken from Girdwood to the prison by a police Land-Rover via Cliftonpark Avenue. I have bruises on my feet, legs, back and shoulders. I was made to take a good wash before I was taken to Girdwood.

The torture was mostly psychological with the exception of the punchings which I got on my first day there. I was warned by a Special Branch officer not to say anything about being ill-treated before I arrived at Girdwood.

On Sunday last when I was in Holywood a telephone call came through when I was in the cubicle. A man with an English accent answered the phone and said to a police officer (bag not over head at this time), 'This is that fucker Faul again. He wants to know who's here.' The peeler replied, 'Tell him to fuck off.'^[2]

On Monday last, 11 October, when I arrived at Crumlin Road prison the Deputy Governor told me that the police wanted to remove me but he had no idea where I was being removed to.

When Shannon disappeared his wife was frantic. No one, neither police, Army nor prison authorities would admit that he was being held. He had literally vanished. After some days, however, some news filtered out. A student, Tony Rosato, had been picked up with some friends, threatened and interrogated by the SB at Palace barracks for two days before being released. Despite threats from the police to keep his mouth shut or else', Rosato went straight to the press. He gave an account of his experiences to members of the *Sunday Times* staff and claimed that while in Holywood he had seen the missing man, Liam Shannon. Questions were asked in Parliament. Faulkner, as Minister of Home Affairs as well as the Northern Ireland PM, denied what was happening, but orders must have filtered down. Finally, nine days after his disappearance, word came that Shannon had emerged. He was now in Crumlin jail, detained, like so many other men, without charge or trial.

Although he had gone through a shattering experience, Shannon was to some extent 'luckier' than another

man – Liam David Rodgers. Rodgers is from Warrenpoint, a Republican but not an IRA man. In the early hours of Monday 11 October he was driving to Belfast from Newcastle, Co. Down, when his car was stopped and searched by the Army. In it they found a variety of Republican pamphlets – none of them 'subversive'. He was taken in for questioning to Castlereagh police barracks and then to Holywood. What follows is his account of what happened.

I was taken to Palace barracks, Holywood, where both my particulars and photographs were taken. I was put into a cubicle. After a half hour I was taken out for a ten-minute interrogation, asked if I were a member of the IRA – I said, 'No'. I accepted responsibility for the literature, saying that I was a member of a Republican Club. No violence was used and I was returned to my cubicle. I helped to remove books to the Interrogation Office.

Next interrogation was an hour later and it involved three Special Branch men, one behind the table and one on either side of it. Same four questions asked and same replies given. They then tried to find out the destination of the books. I replied that this was irrelevant if I was being charged with possession. Then one of the Branch men kicked my chair with the intention of knocking me to the ground. Questions came thick and fast. I was accused of lying. The Branch then moved on to questions relating to the IRA. I denied any connection. They claimed they had information regarding my position, etc. Violence up to this point had consisted of kicking the chair and pulling my hair. Questions changed again to, 'Who held the Quarter-master position in the IRA?' When accused of being QM I denied it. I was told that I would reveal hiding places of arms under pressure.

I was made to stand spreadeagled with fingertips touching the wall. Whilst in this position I was assaulted by the Branch men and repeatedly hit in the stomach. I fell to the ground and was kicked about the body by another Branch man. Then I was asked the same questions again and I gave the same answers. The beating was repeated. One Branch man drove two fingers under my breastbone saying this would release poison into my system. The other Branch man stood behind me kicking the seat of my chair. I lost all sense of time during this interrogation.

Much later Harry Taylor^[3] came and took me to another interrogation room. He asked after my welfare and said that he [Taylor] had nothing to do with the beatings. Asked if I wanted to make a statement about the IRA, I said, 'No'. I was then sent back to the cubicle and allowed to make up a bed.

When woken the next morning, I was made to take down the bed, was taken to the toilet and allowed to wash. I was then sent back to the cubicle and made sit facing the wall until breakfast. After breakfast I was made to sweep out the cubicles, the SB interrogation centre and another hut occupied by Englishmen in plain clothes. For the most of the day I was forced to sit facing the wall or forced to stand with my nose touching the wall.

At 5 p.m. I was again taken to the interrogation hut and told that I was being held in Crumlin Road for a period of twenty-eight days, then sent back to the cubicle. Later I was brought back to the interrogation hut and confronted by one Branch man while another stood behind him. I was ordered to stand to attention. I was asked if I had anything to say and said, 'No'. They said they would hand me over to the paratroopers who they claimed wanted to get their hands on me. I made no reply. I was then told I would be taken to a place where I would be treated twice as severely as I had been up to now. I was then taken to Crumlin Road prison.

In Crumlin Road I was marked in, taken for a bath, medically examined and brought before the Assistant Governor, who informed me that he had received written orders to return me to custody of the RUC. I asked if I was allowed Legal Aid. The Deputy Governor said that he would have to ask the RUC about that.

I was then taken through the prison and into Girdwood where a man wearing a three-quarter-length coat handcuffed me and put a black hood of soft material over my head. This man spoke with an English accent. I was then placed on what I presumed was a jeep, brought to a waiting helicopter and put aboard. I was taken to an unknown destination where I was forced into another vehicle in which I was taken for a two-minute ride.

I was then brought into a building. From the time the bag was put over my head not a word was spoken to me. All communications were made by means of taps on my body and these only concerned the need for movement. I was taken into a room where the handcuffs were taken off and then the hood. The man with an English accent told me that he was a doctor and that he wished to examine me. There was another man present, presumably an assistant. The doctor asked me to strip and gave me a very thorough examination. I was not allowed to dress again but was told to put the hood back over my head which I did.

The door was then opened and someone came and escorted me to the next room. I was stood against the wall, the hood removed and a flash picture was taken. The hood was replaced and I was made to walk forward and after about three minutes a NI voice listed my clothing and asked me to sign for it. The hood was lifted and a light shone into my eyes so that I could only see the paper I was signing. The hood was replaced and I was dressed in a lightweight green boilersuit. I was then taken from that room down a long corridor and through another room where I both felt and heard a rush of air

– possible compressed air. Next I was taken into a room which was very cold and where there was a sound as if a very large volume of water was being pumped near by. This impression was supported by the dampness and vibrations of the wall. I was then led to the wall and spreadeagled against it. My feet and arms were stretched to their limits and I was made to lean with just my fingertips against the wall and unshod feet resting on what I assumed was a concrete floor strewn with chips and bits of wood. These small particles were very sore on the soft pads of my feet. I was in this position for a considerable time until my arms collapsed and my head hit the wall. At this point someone came in and forced me back into my original position. I was feeling the extreme cold.

I was then taken away for interrogation. I was brought into a room and when the guard left the bag was taken off my head. I could see a very shiny table but could only distinguish the outline of my interrogator. The questions related to my supposed connection with the IRA, which I denied. I was then asked about arms dumps and the whereabouts of certain people. I could answer none of these questions through lack of knowledge.

I was then taken back to the original room and spreadeagled against the wall again. This time they straightened my arms against the wall when I collapsed and it was not until my legs gave in that I was taken back for interrogation. This treatment lasted until I completely lost track of time and I only remember vague details. I was given water and bread three times during this period.

One occasion after I had collapsed they forced a pair of shoes onto my feet which were in a very painful condition. I was then taken outside and forced to run twice around some track. I collapsed on the track and was dragged for a short distance. They then half dragged, half ran me, then they let me go and I fell and hit my head against what I think was a door. I was taken back to the original wall, then taken out again, where the process was repeated.

When they returned me to the wall this time I was made to lie on the ground and was rolled in a blanket and allowed to sleep for a short period.

I was taken out again for interrogation, was returned to the wall for a while. I was then rolled in the blanket and allowed to sleep in the blanket, this time for a long while. I was then taken again to the interrogation room where for the first time no light was shone in my face. I was given a cup of hot coffee and allowed to smoke my pipe. I was also allowed to sit down.

After this interrogation I was returned to a different room in which there was a mattress and three blankets. The interrogator led me to believe that he had got these specially for me. I was allowed to remove the bag from my head in this room and also to sleep for a good deal of the time. I also got at least five wholesome meals from this time on.

There were two more interrogations. Eventually I was given a thorough medical, was photographed back and front in the nude and was given back my clothes and personal belongings. The bag was put back over my head. I was driven to the helicopter and returned to Crumlin on Monday 18 October 1971.

Rodgers was 'unluckier' than Shannon in that there was not as widespread a hue and cry about his disappearance. Nonetheless the questions asked in Parliament seem to have embarrassed the government, and he was released from Holywood and returned to Crumlin at the same time as Shannon. As a result of the *Sunday Times* article Compton was asked to prepare a special addendum on the allegations of ill-treatment regarding Shannon and Rosato. This he grudgingly did. It was not published, however. Instead, a few hundred roneoed copies of the addendum were run off and given to MPs. It was signed only by Compton and not Messrs Fay or Gibson. While admitting that Shannon had received 'similar ill-treatment' to that received by the other eleven [sic] 'guineapigs' it makes no reference to Rodgers. As for Tony Rosato's claims that guns had been put in his mouth and blanks fired beside his head Compton lived up (or down) to his usual standard and stated that since it was laid down in the holding centre regulations that all personnel must empty their guns on entry into the hall, Rosato's allegations could not have been true. There was a rule against it!

The main difference between the treatment meted out to the first twelve 'guineapigs' and the last two seems to have been that while the former were part of a carefully conceived and executed experiment, the latter were not. They seem to have been the victims of some RUC 'freelancing' experiment – though clearly there was collusion with the Army personnel. Physical exhaustion was an added factor also, with both men being made to run around in a circle outside the hut. The threat of a 'truth drug' was also used, as part of the build-up designed to terrify the men. ^[4]

There remain a few points to be made about the actual SD treatment. If, as the Parker apologia claims, it was undertaken with regret only because it was necessary to extract information from 'dangerous terrorists',

why did the 'security forces' at no time take the fingerprints of these 'terrorists'? This is surely one of the first things to do when you get your hands on such dangerous men. The forensic evidence can be used not only to obtain convictions against bombers – from unexploded or defused bombs the police have a wide range of fingerprints – but can be used as a weapon during interrogation. Most people will co-operate if confronted with cast-iron evidence of their guilt, such as a fingerprint on an unexploded bomb! The answer of course is that information was not the primary aim of the exercise. It only came second to the experimentation side.

This brings us to another aspect of the whole operation: the basis for selection of the 'guineapigs'. It is clear that the original twelve men were selected on primarily geographical grounds. The province was divided into three, and four men were taken from each area –Belfast, Counties Down and Armagh and Counties Derry and Tyrone. That they were not selected on the grounds that the police/Army/Special Branch believed them to be the top hard-core IRA men was admitted by both Faulkner and Whitelaw, for, of the fourteen men selected for the experiment and subsequently detained and then interned, no fewer than seven were released from Long Kesh. Of the other seven, six were still interned after two years and one, Francis McGuigan, escaped.^[5] It is true of course that some of the fourteen were members of the IRA, either Provisional or Official, but it is equally true that some were not and never had been. P. J. McClean for example, from Beragh, was told during interrogation that he had been chosen because 'we needed someone from the Omagh area, and since you are a well known and respected Civil Rights speaker lots of IRA men must have confided in you'.

But why these fourteen men in particular? Admittedly the 9 August swoop was, from a military point of view, most unsuccessful. No top Provisional or Official leaders were captured. Indeed, of the 342 men still held after forty-eight hours only some 150 were actually in the IRA. Nonetheless, if the Army wanted information on arms dumps, explosions, shootings, etc., they had in their grasp several men whom they knew only too well were more involved and had more information in their heads than most of the fourteen 'guineapigs'. Yet they were left untouched. At their interrogation in Girdwood two well-known members of the IRA were told by Harry Taylor, 'It's a waste of time talking to youse men, you've seen it all before.' This may give some clue as to the pattern involved in choosing the SD 'subjects'. They were nearly all young men, under 30, who were exceptionally fit. Their fitness was necessary if they were to last the eight days (here, however, insufficient research into medical records was done, and several apparently fit but in point of fact quite ill men were included). Their youth also meant that most of them – with four exceptions – had not experienced intensive interrogations before. Most had had experience of being roughly kicked up against a wall, searched, abused and then perhaps questioned for an hour before being released – but then so had a large percentage of the male Catholic population of Belfast by that time. But few if any had had experience likely to prepare them for the SD experiment, designed as it was to induce a week-long psychosis. Consequently, with the exception of the older and more perceptive P. J. McClean, they were unwitting and unsuspecting guineapigs. (One man told me how after an hour standing at the wall he thought to himself that they, the interrogators, were 'soft in the head'. Three days later, he was one of the men who tried to commit suicide by throwing himself head first onto the water pipes.)

Civilian subjects and even Army volunteers' had proven unsatisfactory from the SD researcher's point of view. Here, sanctioned by the government, the researchers had had the perfect subjects upon whom they could experiment. Small wonder that they had a field day. Small wonder that there had to be another cover-up when Compton failed.

Footnotes Chapter 6:

1. The number '21' is interesting. Each of the original twelve 'subjects' had had a number inked on the

backs of their hands and the soles of their feet: P. J. McClean was No. 1, Pat Shivers was No. 2, Micky Montgomery was No. 3. etc. The first twelve coupled with the seven men in the basement cells in Crumlin who were prepared as the 'second batch' of subjects make the numbers up to 19, leaving Davy Rodgers as No. 20 and Liam Shannon as No. 21, thus indicating a degree of long-term planning which both Compton and Parker tried to play down. When P. J. McClean was at the original holding centre at Magilligan he was escorted by a local SB man. As he was being taken into the main room with the rest of the men as Army officers stopped both of them and, consulting his records, said, 'No, he's No. 1', to the apparent surprise of the Branch man.

2. This is no doubt a reference to Fr. Denis Faul, who had been phoning Holywood continually to inquire as to the whereabouts of Shannon.
3. Harry Taylor, Belfast's best-known SB man, was the Branch Number Two at Palace barracks – his superior was Michael Slevin, who (shades of Col. Wilford of Bloody Sunday fame) was subsequently to receive the MBE in Her Majesty's Honours List of 1973. Taylor is unlikely to receive a similar decoration and indeed has already been used by both the Army and the police as a 'tall guy' because he is so well known to both Republicans and Loyalists. The likely upshot of his long-standing loyalty and service to the Special Branch would seem to be a golden handshake – and more likely silver than golden – and a ticket to some faraway former colony, as a sop to the SDLP and those Catholics who demanding a reform of the RUC and Special Branch. (A false prediction. He is still in Belfast in 1981.)
4. In fact, drugs of any kind used in conjunction with the SD treatment would almost certainly have been self-defeating. The drugs which were later used (see [Chapter 9](#)) during interrogations would have had the effect of so completely disorientating a person undergoing SD that he would be totally unable to convey any meaningful information, even if he wanted to.
5. McGuigan was the first man to escape from Long Kesh when, in February 1972, he walked out of the camp disguised as a priest – a trick subsequently used a year later by James Francis Green, who walked out on 9 September 1973 leaving his brother, a priest, trussed up. Only three other men were successfully to escape from the camp: William Kelly, who on 11 March 1973, in a dense fog, succeeding in cutting through the wire and vanishing; Brendan Hughes, who left in a dust-cart; and Ivor Bell, through a substitution. Both Hughes and Bell were recaptured in Belfast within months. Two young Loyalist prisoners succeeded in escaping hidden in a dust-cart, but were recaptured within an hour.

Author's note. Subsequently there have been two tunnel escapes from the Kesh, one by Provos and the other by members of the IRSP.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 7

Parker: Cover-up Mk 2

The Parker Committee set a new and dangerous precedent. Previously there had been numerous judicial or quasi-judicial tribunals set up to determine if British troops had been guilty of brutality or 'ill-treatment'. Generally they had found the soldiers not guilty, or, at worst, 'over-zealous'. Always, however, it had been stated or implied that if brutality *had* occurred, especially during interrogations, it was wrong, and disciplinary measures would have to be undertaken to prevent a recurrence. Now for the first time a committee was established to decide not whether ill-treatment had occurred but whether it should be allowed to occur in the future.

Their terms of reference were, they state, to consider 'whether and, if so, in what respects, the procedures currently authorized for the interrogation of persons suspected of terrorism and for their custody while subject to interrogation require amendment'.^[1] The committee first met on 3 December 1971 and completed the report on 31 January 1972, although it was withheld from publication until 3 March 1972. The committee claims to have held a number of meetings, all in private, and considered some twenty-five representations from members of the public and ten from representative organizations as well as oral evidence from thirty-three witnesses, many of them from the civil and armed services.^[2]

Parker, although riddled with inconsistencies and distortions, is deliberately a much more subtle report than Compton. For instance, there is a Minority Report submitted by Lord Gardiner.

The Majority Report was by Lord Parker and Mr. J.A. Boyd-Carpenter,^[3] and it did its best to acquit the security forces of any real wrong-doing. 'Sensory Deprivation,' they claim in para. 31, 'subject to the proper safeguards, limiting the occasion on which and the degree to which they can be applied, would be in conformity with the Directive'.^[4] 'What would be intolerable for a man in poor health might amount to no more than inconvenience for a fit man,' they claim in para. 29. (If the treatment amounts to little more than an inconvenience for a suspect, why, one is tempted to ask, do it in the first place?) They go on to assert that because of this 'a doctor with some psychiatric training should be present at all times at the interrogation centre and should be in a position to observe the course of oral interrogation. It is not suggested that he should be himself responsible for stopping the interrogation – rather that he should warn the controller if he felt the interrogation was being pressed too far, having regard to the demeanour of the detainee, but leaving the decision to the controller' (para. 41).

In para. 27 they state that they 'do not subscribe to the principle that the end justifies the means', having in fact used six paragraphs to do just that. According to paras. 20-23, as a result of torturing – or 'subjecting to ill-treatment' – the fourteen 'guineapigs', the 'following new information was obtained':

- (1) Identification of a further 700 members of both IRA factions, and their positions in the organizations;
- (2) over 40 sheets giving details of the organization and structure of IRA units and sub-units;
- (3) details of possible IRA operations; arms caches; safe houses; communications and supply routes, including those across the border; and locations of wanted persons;
- (4) details of morale, operational directives, propaganda techniques, relations with other organizations and future plans;

(5) the discovery of individual responsibility for about 85 incidents recorded on police files which had previously remained unexplained.

21. It is also not without significance that the rate at which arms, ammunition and explosives were discovered in Northern Ireland by the Security Forces increased markedly after 9 August, and much the greater part of the haul has resulted either directly or indirectly from information obtained by interrogation in depth. Details of the total amount discovered in 1971 are as follows:

	1 January to 8 August	9 August to 31 December
Machine guns	1	25
Rifles	66	178
Pistols/revolvers	86	158
Shotguns	40	52
Rockets	—	55
Ammunition	41,000 rounds	115,000 rounds
Explosives	1,194 lb.	2,541 lb.

22. There is of course a danger that, if the techniques are applied to an undue degree, the detainee will, either consciously or unconsciously, give false information. So far as the operations in Northern Ireland are concerned, however, the information given was quickly proved to be correct except in a few cases in which incorrect descriptions were given of persons who could not be identified by name.

23. A further advantage was the 'snowball' effect generated by following up the information thus obtained. Moreover, the indirect effect of these two operations of interrogation was that further information could be, and was, more readily obtained by ordinary police interrogation.

This is obviously an attempt to justify the illegal use of SD techniques by claiming substantial gains for the Army and police as a result of the interrogation. They go on to state dogmatically (para. 24) that 'there is no doubt that the information obtained by these two operations directly and indirectly was responsible for the saving of lives of innocent citizens', a claim which Lord Gardiner in his minority report also makes. It is however a grotesque and ludicrous statement, as a proper examination of the figures clearly shows.^[5] The fact is that little or no information of value was obtained from any of the fourteen men, even though some of them were members of the IRA and indeed, quartermasters, who would have had considerable information of interest to the Army. Indeed, as the *Sunday Times* Insight Team has pointed out,^[6] not only did the introduction of internment drastically accelerate the incidence of violence, particularly in Belfast,^[7] but the numbers of arrests, arms hauls etc., did not show any substantial upsurge until at least three months after the SD experiments. Parker would have us believe that the SD torture experiment resulted in the men cracking and giving valuable information. This is not so. But, as the Army anticipated, there were side-effects, referred to by Parker (para. 23) as the 'snowball effect'. The introduction of internment saw a spectacular upsurge in the number of young people who volunteered to join the IRA. In the confused situation of the autumn of 1971, with many of the more experienced IRA men on the run or operating on a full-time basis, there was not time to teach many young people the techniques of resisting torture and intensive interrogation. Nor had all of them been imbued with the deep-rooted political convictions necessary to all revolutionary movements. Consequently, December 1971 and January 1972 saw some of the younger IRA men who were arrested cracking under the brutal interrogations of the RUC Special Branch.^[8] Moreover, news of what had been done to the fourteen 'guineapigs' had become widespread – and in some cases even exaggerated. Consequently without having to resort to further use of SD methods the Special Branch could and did hold it over many suspects as a threat. 'If you don't talk you'll get what those others got,' became a familiar opening gambit at interrogation centres. And some did crack; hence the rise in the arrest figures and arms hauls – although, as Lord Parker admits, as the security forces' intelligence network grew they were bound to get more results anyway. And so while arrests did increase in number it is absurd for Lord Parker to relate this directly to the SD 'experiment'. It is also instructive to note that of the 1,576 men arrested between 9 August 1971 and 16 December 1971 no fewer than 934 – 60 per cent – were released, tending to make a nonsense of

Parker's claims of 'great success'. Of course his report was issued in March 1972 at a time when the Army PROs were making that annual ritual claim about the 'by now defeated IRA'.

Lord Parker and Mr Boyd-Carpenter do admit, however, that some aspects of the SD experiments were 'unsatisfactory'. After stating that 'the techniques are taught at purpose-built intelligence centres where Service personnel are instructed in the Art [*sic*] of interrogation in depth and where members of our Services are also taught to be resistant to such interrogations' (para. 13), they go on to confess that 'there are no standing orders or manuals dealing in detail with the use of such techniques, and accordingly their exact application in real life situations depends upon the training already received by those who employ them'. Then follows a most disingenuous attempt at a cover-up as para. 13 continues:

It will be seen at once that such techniques can easily be used to excess, and specially so when their use is entrusted to personnel not completely trained in their use. To illustrate the matter, we understand that the Service training envisages a comparatively short period at the wall and subjection to hooding and noise there, while the detainees are taken one by one to be medically examined and the method of interrogation is assessed. Once that interrogation has taken place, it is envisaged that normally a detainee will be taken to a cell and not returned to the wall, or be hooded or subjected to noise. In practice, it may turn out that, through lack of proper accommodation, through lack of guards, through lack of interrogators, through the need to obtain personal and medical files and such matters, the degree of use envisaged is exceeded. In those circumstances, and in the absence of definite guidelines, there is a risk that the techniques will be applied to a greater degree than is justified either morally or under the Directive.

So, we are asked to believe, any suffering caused is unwitting and the result of unfortunate bureaucratic lapses, despite the fact that, as they admit elsewhere in the report, the whole training and experimental system had been set up since early March – six months previously. As Lord Gardiner says in his minority report (para. 14 (iii)), 'there was ample time to train a team of interrogators in our well tried and effective war-time methods'.

Parker's references to the medical risks involved are dealt with in [Chapter 8](#) of this book, and the rest of the majority report is concerned with making a few generalizations about 'safeguards' for the future – the authority of a UK minister should he invoked, a senior officer and a doctor with some psychiatric training should be present, careful records should be kept, etc. Subject to these 'humane safeguards' which, they stress, should be 'guidelines as opposed to rules', since 'it may sometimes be impracticable to comply fully with them', SD experiments into how to create psychoses in prisoners, which can literally drive them insane, can continue.

Lord Gardiner's minority report offers some contrast. Clearly, he was not too pleased with what he had learnt about the experiments. He provides far more information about the 'shortcomings' of the personnel at the holding centre than the entire Compton Report does. He also reveals (para. 6) that the Army claim to have used the SD technique in Aden, adding that, surprisingly, no mention of it is made in the Bowen Report.^[9]

Unlike his colleagues or Sir Edmund Compton (and one of his team was the former chairman of the British Medical Association) Lord Gardiner does evince some concern at the medical after-effects of SD treatment, and pays some heed to what the medical experts have to say. But above all he is concerned with the total illegality of the entire torture proceedings, as indeed, with his eminent legal background, he should be. It is worth quoting him in full on the legal issues involved:

Were they authorized?

8. We have found this a point of some difficulty because our terms of reference appear to assume that the procedures were or are authorized. The only evidence before us on this point was that it could not be said that UK Ministers had ever approved them specifically, as opposed to agreeing the general principles set out in the Directive on Military Interrogation. If any document or Minister had purported to authorize them it would have been invalid because the procedures were and are illegal by the domestic law and may also have been illegal by international law. I regard this point as so important that I must develop it.

9. I agree with my colleagues that the only relevant document is the Directive. This lays down two requirements:

(a) Those concerned are to acquaint themselves with the laws of the country concerned, and are not to act unlawfully under any circumstances whatever.

(b) They are to follow the principles laid down in Article 3 of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War (1949) and these include the prohibition of 'outrages upon personal dignity, in particular, humiliating and degrading treatment'.

10. *Domestic Law*

(a) By our own domestic law the powers of police and prison officers are well known. Where a man is in lawful custody it is lawful to do anything which is reasonably necessary to keep him in custody but it does not further or otherwise make lawful an assault. Forcibly to hood a man's head and keep him hooded against his will and handcuff him if he tries to remove it, as in one of the cases in question, is an assault and both a tort and a crime. So is wall-standing of the kind referred to. Deprivation of diet is also illegal unless duly awarded as a punishment under prison rules. So is enforced deprivation of sleep.

(b) In Northern Ireland in normal times the powers of the police and prison officers in relation to those in custody are substantially the same except for an immaterial difference in their Judges' Rules. Of the Regulations scheduled to the Civil Authorities (Special Powers) Act (Northern Ireland) (1922), Regulation 10 provides that 'Any officer of The Royal Ulster Constabulary, for the preservation of the peace and maintenance of order, may authorize the arrest without warrant and detention for a period of not more than 48 hours of any person for the purpose of interrogation.' This Regulation does not in any way extend to ordinary police powers as to the permissible methods or limits of interrogation. Regulation 11 provides a limited power of detention and a limited right to photograph and finger-print and Regulation 12 a limited right of internment. Regulation 13 (5) provides that 'persons detained or interned in any of Her Majesty's prisons shall be subject to any rules for the government of prisoners awaiting trial including such general rules as are applicable to such prisoners, for the time being in force, except in so far as the said rules are inconsistent with this regulation'. We have seen the Prison Rules and certain Directions made by the Minister for Home Affairs, Northern Ireland, with regard thereto. There is nothing in them to extend to ordinary police powers of interrogation or to validate the procedures.

(c) We have received both written and oral representations from many legal bodies and individual lawyers from both England and Northern Ireland. There has been no dissent from the view that the procedures are illegal alike by the law of England and the law of Northern Ireland. We have seen the Constitution of Aden and the relevant Statutory Instruments and Regulations relating to Aden and the same applies to Aden law.

(d) This being so, no Army Directive and no Minister could lawfully or validly have authorized the use of the procedures. Only Parliament can alter the law. The procedures were and are illegal.

11. *International Law*

(a) It has been submitted to us that the procedures also involved infringement of

(i) Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which provides that

'No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment';

(ii) Articles 7 and 10 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (which the United Kingdom has signed but not yet ratified) which provides that

'7. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. In particular, no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

'10.(i) All persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person';

(iii) Article 3 of each of the four Geneva Conventions scheduled to the Geneva Conventions Act 1957 which, so far as material, provides that

'In the case of armed conflict not of an international character occurring in the territory of one of the High Contracting Parties, each Party to the conflict shall be bound to apply, as a minimum, the following provisions:

'(1.) Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including members of armed forces who have laid down their arms and those placed hors de combat by sickness, wounds, detention, or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely...

'To this end the following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever with respect to the above mentioned persons:

'(a) Violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture; ...'

'(c) Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment';

(iv) Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, which provides that

'3. No one shall be subjected to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.'

Article 15(i) provides that in time of war or other public emergency some of the provisions of this Convention may be derogated from, but Article 15(a) provides that 'No derogation from ... Article 3 ... shall be made under this provision.'

(b) I do not propose to express any opinion on these submissions because (i) it may be open to argument which Convention or Conventions apply in the conditions of Northern Ireland;

(ii) the most eminent lawyers notoriously differ on questions of construction. Words like 'torture', 'inhuman' and 'degrading' are clearly open to doubt;

(iii) as the procedures were admittedly illegal by the domestic law and no Minister had power to alter the law, it is not necessary, for the purpose of the point I am discussing, to decide whether or not they were also illegal by international law.^[10]

This is the strongest statement yet from an establishment figure on Army interrogation procedures, but it is interesting that despite this he makes no recommendations for the arrest, trial or even disciplining of the torturers and those who gave their orders. Indeed, at the end of his report he appears to have regrets, and makes an almost pathetic attempt to exonerate Brian Faulkner and the RUC:

In fairness to the Government of Northern Ireland and the Royal Ulster Constabulary, I must say that, according to the evidence before us, although the Minister of Home Affairs, Northern Ireland [Brian Faulkner], purported to approve the procedures, he had no idea that they were illegal, and it was, I think, not unnatural that the Royal Ulster Constabulary should assume that the army had satisfied themselves that the procedures which they were training the police to employ were legal.

This is ludicrous. Brian Faulkner was not only the Northern Ireland Minister of Home Affairs at the time but the Prime Minister as well. As such he personally signed the special warrants for the detention and extensive interrogation of the fourteen men. If the Minister of Home Affairs is not aware that torture and assault are criminal offences (as Lord Gardiner has admitted) then he is either totally immoral or totally incompetent. Similarly, if senior members of the RUC Special Branch didn't know that common law assault is both a tort and a crime they should have been sacked from their posts long ago.^[11] Further-more, not only did Brian Faulkner personally sign the special warrants authorizing the fourteen men to be taken away for 'the treatment', he then attempted to deny to the English Cabinet that any of what both Compton and Parker subsequently admitted to have occurred had taken place. There is certain grim aptness in the words of Belfast song-writer Barney McIlvogue:

O the craven and the cowardly,
They cannot be absolved,
They do the work of the torturers,
And say they're not involved,
At Buchenwald and Belsen
They said they weren't to blame,
But at the Court of Nuremburg
They were sentenced just the same.

As yet, Belfast has seen no war crimes tribunals.

*

On the day, 3 March 1972, that the Parker Report was issued, the Prime Minister, Edward Heath, made a statement to the House of Commons. After fully concurring with the Majority Report and stressing the alleged dramatic successes in the intelligence field which had resulted from torturing the fourteen men, he went on to state that in fact the government would be accepting the Minority Report of Lord Gardiner

instead. Some, like Frank McManus, MP, saw this as the PM being 'shamed into discontinuing barbaric practices'; others like Stormont MP Robert Mitchell denounced Heath for 'chickening out'.^[12] Most political commentators felt on the other hand that his actions were designed to secure the continued support of the Labour Party with its bipartisan approach to the Irish question, especially with 'peace offensives' in the air. There is an element of truth in this view, but even more likely it seems was the fact that Heath was worried about Europe. He had already been embarrassed by the Army's clumsy handling of the Northern Ireland situation and not least by their repeated claims to have 'got on top of' the IRA. He had neither known nor cared what the Army was up to at the interrogation centres but was annoyed when it was revealed that details of the torture would be raised at the European Human Rights Court at Strasbourg. If Britain were to be indicted in the court by her European neighbours it would not be an auspicious start to Britain's entry to Europe – only two days earlier the European Communities Bill had reached its committee stage – and so peace in Ireland had become a priority. Consequently, blatant illegalities should be avoided; hence the choice of Lord Gardiner, a well-known 'stickler' for the law, as a member of the committee. Now Heath could accept the recommendations of the Minority Report without its censure while at the same time accepting the whitewash of Messrs Parker and Boyd-Carpenter.

If the Army were displeased they didn't show it. They had got away with their experiment, and had plenty more to occupy themselves with. As for the RUC, no one as usual, had bothered to consult them. Since, however, they had always preferred the less sophisticated methods of boot and fist to new-fangled psychological torture, they were probably quite content so long as they were not used as scapegoats by the Army.

Footnotes Chapter 7:

1. *Report of the Committee of Privy Councillors Appointed to Consider Authorised Procedures for the Interrogation of Persons Suspected of Terrorism*, Cmnd. 4901 (HMSO). This quotation is from p. v.
2. The use of the word 'claims' here is advised, since the committee failed to publish the 'evidence' received or to name those who had furnished it, on the grounds that 'considerations of national security were involved' – considerations convenient for those torturers who presented 'evidence'!
3. A cynic might question the detached impartiality of Mr Boyd-Carpenter, since his only son Thomas was Company Commander of the First Battalion, Scots Guards, stationed at Lurgan.
4. The Joint Directive on Military Interrogation in Internal Security Operations Overseas, issued on 17 February 1965 and amended on 10 February 1967.
5. Indeed, following this logic one could maintain that a major strike at Ford Motor Works, Dagenham, is automatically justified in that it is responsible, through the ensuing substantial loss in car production, for saving the lives of countless would-be road-accident victims.
6. Sunday Times Insight Team, *Ulster* (Penguin, 1972).
7. For example:

	Soldiers killed	RUC killed	Civilians killed
April-July 1971:	4	0	4
August-November 1971:	30	11	73
8. On November 1971 the *Sunday Times* published statements from various doctors concerning the men who had been savagely beaten by the Special Branch, particularly between 16 October and 18 November. It was widely accepted that these cases were only the 'tip of the iceberg'. Witness also the large number of statements from this period taken by the Association for Legal Justice.
9. In fact it would seem that the Army was lying about this point. Clearly, certain aspects of the SD treatment were used in Aden, as mentioned previously, but there seems to be no evidence whatsoever of the full SD treatment as used in Ireland being used in Fort Morbut or any of the other Aden torture centres. I base these remarks not merely on the worthless Bowen Report, but on personal interviews

with Adeni detainees, the Rastgeldi Report published by Amnesty International, and Peter Deeley's book *Beyond Breaking Point*.

10. See the Minority Report to the Parker Report, paras. 8-11.
11. In fact in 1973 Michael Slevin, one of the leading SB men of the time, was awarded an MBE. (Two of his subordinates were less lucky. John Doherty, a Gaelic speaker, was identified as one of the torturers at Palace barracks and summarily 'executed' by the Provos near Lifford in October 1973; and Ivan Johnson, who had been accused of brutality at Ballykelly, was shot on 15 December 1973, again by the Provos.)
12. But then, Mr Mitchell was often given to bizarre ideas. In 1971, for instance, he recommended that the Army use flame-throwers against rowdy (and presumably non-'Loyalist') crowds; and later that year he advocated that the internment camp he set up in the wilds of Canada, rather than Long Kesh.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 8 The After-effects

'No detainee in Northern Ireland has suffered permanent lasting injury whatsoever, mental or physical' – Reginald Maudling^[1]

'The basic fact is that there was no brutality, no torture, no brainwashing, no physical injury, no mental injury' – Lord Balniel
(as Minister of State for Defense)^[1]

When the Parker Committee was set up it invited several well-known psychiatrists and doctors to 'advise' it. In the Majority Report of Lord Parker and Mr. Boyd-Carpenter they admit blandly that the simple answer as to whether the men subjected to SD are likely to suffer mental after-effects was, 'Don't know.' As they explain (para. 15), 'One of the difficulties is that there is no reliable information in regard to mental effects, particularly long-term mental effects, and, as one would expect, the medical evidence varied somewhat in emphasis.' Further on they state that 'it is true that in a small minority of cases some mental effects may persist for up to two months. There is no evidence of a mental effect lasting longer ...' There is a simple reason for this. No one had ever (outside of the Soviet Union, possibly) been subjected to this particular intensive SD treatment before, and consequently at the time of the Parker Report no follow-up psychiatric tests had been run on the victims.^[2] As the Majority Report admits (para. 16), previous tests on Army personnel were no guide to the effectiveness of SD – hence the Army's desire for 'rebel guineapigs': 'In such cases no lasting mental effect whatever has been observed, but in our opinion this is by no means conclusive. *The real thing is obviously quite different from the experiments.* [My emphasis – JM] Going on to explain that the same inadequacies applied to the civilian experimentation, Messrs Parker and Boyd-Carpenter then proceed to widge^[3] in a most ludicrous manner. 'There is no real risk for long-term mental injury if the proper safeguards are applied in the operation of these techniques.'

Lord Gardiner in his Minority Report is much less sanguine. He admits that 'it would seem unlikely that the procedures would not result in some minor physical injuries' (para. 13a) and, in contrast to his colleagues, states that the decibel level of the 'white noise' might result for 8 per cent in temporary loss of hearing and in 1 per cent in some permanent loss of hearing. As for the mental effects, he is again more frank than his collaborators on the origins of the SD treatment:

According to our information, interrogation in depth as described in the first Compton Report is a form of sensory isolation leading to mental disorientation which was itself invented by the KGB [*sic*] in Russia where they first placed suspects in the dark and in silence.

As one group of distinguished medical specialists put it: 'Sensory isolation is one method of inducing an artificial psychosis or episode of insanity. We know that people who have been through such an experience do not forget it quickly and may experience symptoms of mental distress for months or years. We know that some artificially induced

psychoses, for instance those produced by drugs like LSD or mescaline, have in fact proved permanent; and there is no reason to suppose that this may not be a danger with psychoses produced by sensory deprivation. Even if such psychotic symptoms as delusions and hallucinations do not persist, a proportion of persons who have been subjected to these procedures are likely to continue to exhibit anxiety attacks, tremors, insomnia, nightmares and other symptoms of neurosis with which psychiatrists are familiar from their experience of treating ex-prisoners of war and others who have been confined and ill-treated.'

There is a considerable bibliography of experiments in this field, particularly in Canada. Some experiments have been done in England with troops and civilian volunteers, but it was the cumulative effect of the techniques which was important in the present context and *naturally neither troops nor civilians had ever been subjected to such cumulative techniques as were used in Northern Ireland and it was impossible scientifically to prove that they would, or that they would not, have lasting effect ...* [My emphasis – JM] All emphasised the fact that in the field of mental disorientation everyone had a different threshold, which made the imposition of specific time limits of great, and some though insuperable, difficulty.

So much for the 'safeguards' suggested by Messrs Parker and Boyd-Carpenter, in flagrant contradiction to their own expert witnesses. And what is one to make of Reginald Maudling's statement at the beginning of this chapter? One point worth bearing in mind here is that a distinguished neurologist and a psychiatrist had been invited by the Tory government to give evidence to the Parker Committee. Professor Wall and Dr. Antony Storr were asked by BSSRS^[4] to visit the 'guineapigs' in Long Kesh accompanied by a Belfast doctor, Pearse O'Malley, who had already seen three of the men, to give an impartial assessment of their mental state. But permission to visit Long Kesh was refused them – the man responsible being none other than Reginald Maudling.

Dr. O'Malley, a Belfast psychiatrist, was the first medical man to see any of the men who had undergone the SD experiment. He saw two of the original twelve men in Crumlin Road jail sixteen days after their ordeal, and one of the subsequent 'guineapigs' in October. He estimated that all three had developed a psychosis within the first day of interrogation. 'The psychosis consisted of loss of sense of time, perceptual disturbances leading to visual and auditory hallucinations, profound apprehension and depression, and delusional beliefs – e.g. hearing Paisley lead an evangelical choir intent on slaughtering Catholics.'^[5]

Of the three men, Dr. O'Malley gave as his professional opinion that one would recover completely, one would possibly recover but the process would be a lengthy one, and one was in need of urgent psychiatric assistance if he was to make a full recovery. Despite the doctor's recommendations, nothing was done by the authorities and all fourteen men were subsequently moved from Crumlin jail to Long Kesh.

As mentioned before, little or nothing had hitherto been known about the long-term effects of such intense and prolonged sensory deprivation upon people. What was certainly known was that in order for men to recover, amongst many other things, relaxed, peaceful and friendly surroundings were needed.^[6] In stark contrast to this are the conditions in Long Kesh. Long Kesh is damp. It is overcrowded – and many believe that the overcrowding is deliberate. The actual space allocated, fifty feet by twenty-five feet for forty men, living and sleeping combined, is liable, when applied on a similar scale to rats or monkeys, to produce cannibalism in the former and very aggressive behaviour in the latter.^[7] It is almost totally lacking in adequate recreational or educational facilities. Worst of all, perhaps, are the medical facilities. Since 1971 when the camp was first opened there have been numerous complaints about lack of treatment for people suffering from deafness, asthma, dental problems, heart complaints, etc. On 9 September 1973 an internee Francis Dodds, aged 31, who had been previously examined the day before by the camp doctor and informed that there was nothing wrong with him, collapsed and died of a heart attack. Hygiene with regard to sheets, pillow-cases and towels was non-existent and the internees often went for weeks without clean laundry. As for medical treatment, the most common was a standard issue of tranquillizers – 2 mg. or 5 mg. of Valium or the sedative Mist. Chloral Hydrate. This tended to be given out for any ailment, from a sprained wrist to acute anxiety neuroses. Clearly this was not the best environment for men recovering from intense SD.

Nonetheless, these were the conditions to which they were subjected.

Although no test results existed, this side of the Iron Curtain at least, of the after-effects of intense SD, much work had been done on the after-effects of similar highly traumatic experiences, such as battle fatigue. Loughlin says: 'Post-traumatic symptoms can run the gamut of clinical manifestations. We also recognize that anxiety, hypochondriacal and hysterical reactions are the most frequent. Phobias, depressions, emotional fatigue and the obsessive-compulsive reactions are less frequently observed.'^[8] Hocking adds that the anxieties created can in their turn produce gastro-intestinal, cardio-vascular and genito-urinary symptoms, tremors, sleep disturbance and its subjective reactions, all of which may be very long lasting, if not permanent.^[9]

Nonetheless, the government continued to refuse to allow independent and distinguished doctors, psychiatrists and neurologists to examine the men concerned. Despite this, a committee from Amnesty International, consisting of a Swedish chairman, a Dutch doctor and a Norwegian lawyer managed to examine four of the internees mentioned by Compton and concluded that their treatment clearly amounted to brutality', adding that the techniques used on them were 'dangerous both to the immediate mental health of the individual subjected to this treatment and to the long-term health of some subjects, especially those with a family history of mental illness'. Again, there was no response from the authorities.

There the matter rested for some time. The fourteen men remained incarcerated in Long Kesh, all independent inquiries were consistently refused, and the men were not even allowed visits from their own doctors. Gradually things went from bad to worse as many of the men's mental and physical health deteriorated. In March 1972, seven months after the SD treatment, one of the men, Sean McKenna, became so bad that he had to be transferred to the camp hospital. He couldn't bear to be alone, shook continually, found it hard to articulate, had severe headaches, recurrent nightmares about being attacked by groups of men, and kept bursting into tears. He was subsequently transferred to a psychiatric hospital and eventually released. Jim Auld too had to be moved to the camp hospital in a state of collapse. News of this leaked out,^[10] and more pressure was put on the Whitelaw administration to speed up the release of internees as he had promised. (That many of the men were being held solely as political hostages was common knowledge, and was confirmed when Whitelaw ordered the release of several hundred men whom both Lord Carrington and Brian Faulkner had publicly, and without a shred of evidence, branded as 'murderers'. Faulkner then hastily made yet another volte-face and announced that he had been going to release the men anyway if Whitelaw had not taken over the imposition of direct rule.) And so, when the gates of Long Kesh opened in July 1972 and large-scale releases began, amongst those freed were six of the 'guineapigs'. Six remained, and were there still two years later. (Francis McGuigan had already escaped and Sean McKenna had been transferred to the psychiatric hospital.) Once some of the men were released reputable doctors, as opposed to paid government functionaries, were able to examine them.

Professor Robert Daly is an expert on Sensory Deprivation. A graduate of Dublin University and then an instructor in psychiatry at the University of North Carolina, he later became a lecturer in psychiatry at Edinburgh University before moving to University College, Cork, where he lectures at present. Among his many publications are articles on the Sensory Deprivation elements in aerospace medicine and artificial kidney machines. Consequently, when the Fianna Fail government of Jack Lynch decided to take the British government to the International Court at Strasbourg it is hardly surprising that Dr. Daly was one of the experts asked to examine some of the victims of Army and Special Branch 'interrogation', and in particular, some of the SD 'guineapigs'.^[11] Because the cases were due to be heard at Strasbourg, most of the psychiatrists held their counsel for a time. As the procedures were prolonged and procrastination followed delay, some began to speak out, feeling it to be a very real matter for public concern. One of the first was Dr. Daly.

In an interview with *The Times* – hardly a 'pro-Republican' or 'subversive' newspaper – he said that he had interviewed around twenty men who had been subjected to extreme coercive pressure while in the hands of the security forces in the North, including some who had been subjected to Sensory Deprivation.

Almost all the patients I saw had overt psychiatric illness. The individuals I have seen have been experiencing considerable psychological disability and suffering, and also psychosomatic problems. The commonest symptoms found were of marked anxiety, fear and dread, as well as insomnia, nightmares and startle responses. These were characteristic of people who had been subjected to traumatic experiences, like shell-shock in wartime. Depression was almost universal amongst these individuals. Weeping attacks have also been common. I feel that it is particularly worrying that the problems of psychosomatic illness, such as peptic ulcers, headaches and buzzing in the ears have emerged in the men so quickly – a considerable number are already showing such symptoms.

Usually, he explained, these symptoms would not emerge until a long period had elapsed.

The shortness of the period in these cases might point to the severity of the experience. The men have a diminished will to live, a generally diminished hold on life. Some of the men have said they don't care if they live or die. These people exhibited 'parasuicidal phenomena'.

In other words, although they may not actually attempt suicide, they might well take undue and dangerous risks, regardless of their safety. 'Some of the men said they would sooner die than face further interrogation or torture chamber experience.'

'The men are generally irritable and inattentive to their surroundings.' (Although Professor Daly does not mention it, one of the 'guineapigs' walked out of one of the Professor's testing sessions saying that he 'couldn't take it anymore', and that it reminded him too much of the interrogations.) 'Some of the men have had emotional disturbances to the extent that it is disabling. Some are now unable to work.' (One, indeed, had to be sent to Dundrum psychiatric hospital in the South for a period of time after his release from Long Kesh.)

As to whether the mental illness in the men could be permanent, Professor Daly had this to say:

Only the future can tell us. It would be irresponsible to say that there would be no more long-term effects. In other contexts there has been considerable delay, in some cases, between exposure to ill-treatment and the appearance of symptoms. We should be very worried about the delayed onset of symptoms in a person who has been subjected to ill-treatment.

Professor Daly stressed that the whole SD process was a 'package deal'. Being awoken in the middle of the night, being beaten, confused as to your whereabouts, lied to and insulted, was all part of the 'unfreezing process' through which your psychological defences were broken down, and terror and humiliation were induced. Hence the photographing in the nude, being forced to urinate while running, refusal to allow toilet visits, the sadism and abuse. Meanwhile the physiological functions of the body were being disturbed by the very low or non-existent intake of calories, high temperatures caused by sweating which could lead to dehydration, coupled with the cold at night, sleep deprivation and loss of the sense of touch. 'The whole experience was a package,' he said, put together in a pre-planned way. 'Whether you want to call it interrogation in depth or brainwashing is academic. The aim of the treatment was to cause temporary psychosis – temporary insanity, which was a severe psychological injury liable to have lasting consequences.' Of course, the men did have psychotic illnesses, with delusions and auditory and visual hallucinations.

When questioned by *The Times* reporter as to whether the men could be faking the symptoms, Professor Daly replied in the negative. 'It is very hard for a layman to simulate mental illness in a clinical interview,' he said. 'There was a consistency, with a variety of details, in what they told me, which was not in keeping with simulated mental illness. When the men took psychological paper-and-pencil tests their scores indicated that they were what they said they were.' His interviews had been conducted a year after their original SD treatment (i.e., August-September 1972) and judging by the state most of them were in it is important that 'considerable medical help is made available to these men, both for treatment and for prevention of the

emergence of further difficulties'.^[12]

Confirmation of Dr. Daly's conclusions came from Dr. Anthony Starr, the Harley Street psychiatrist. As early as November 1971 he had warned: 'Nearly everyone can be reduced to a state of helplessness, dependency and even mental illness if the right techniques are used. The physical results of such treatment are severe enough, and some may be permanent. The mental effects are much more difficult to predict, but the effects of terror are seldom entirely transient.'^[13] Dr. Storr had given evidence to the Parker Committee on the dangers of SD interrogation methods, but his words had largely been ignored (except perhaps by Lord Gardiner). Two years later, when interviewed by *The Times* about Professor Daly's conclusions, he said: 'It is exactly what I would expect. All the evidence is that SD, even for paid volunteers in the best possible circumstances, is an extremely alarming experience. It is very frightening to go mad.' ... 'They (the security forces) have by these methods made people experience what schizophrenics or others experience.' In conclusion he said: 'The thing that I think needs stressing is that the general public does not realize that procedures which do not actually involve beating up other people can still do permanent harm to them. What interrogators want today, all over the world, is to find methods of breaking people down which don't leave marks.'^[14] Sensory Deprivation is one of those techniques.

The government's response to this barrage of scientific evidence and opinion was predictable – and dishonest. The Northern Ireland Office said that it 'stood by the statement made by Mr. Maudling in November 1971'! Asked if any checks had been made on the 'hooded men' since they had been released in order to find out the long-term effects of the Sensory Deprivation the anonymous spokesman said: 'We have no access to these men. They are not under surveillance.' (A somewhat slipshod attitude for soldiers to take to men whom they had previously alleged were terrorists, or 'murderers', as Lord Carrington would say!) 'It is not really possible to follow up such private individuals, nor do we know what they have been doing since then.' This is another lie. Five of the men have been living at home, at the same addresses from which they were 'lifted' on the morning of 9 August 1971. Four of them have been frequently 'screened' by the Army and one, Micky Montgomery, was recently in the news when he became the first Republican to be elected to the Derry City Council for forty years. As for those still held – Donnelly, Hannaway, Clarke, Shannon, McNally and McKerr – the spokesman admitted that they were still in Long Kesh but declined to comment when asked what mental and physical state they were in or what tests had been carried out on them. In fact, reports emanating from Long Kesh indicate that two of them are in a particularly bad way and are given heavy doses of Librium and Valium daily. Kevin Hannaway, moreover, still has the blood disease which he had on arrest, but now in an exacerbated state which necessitates special blood tablets daily. Most have not been allowed to see their family doctors.^[15]

Further light on the after-effects of Sensory Deprivation was also given at the Conference for the Abolition of Torture organized by the Irish Section of Amnesty International in Dublin on 6 October 1973.^[16] Despite the apparently naive state of mind of some of the speakers – Professor Russell of Bristol University, for example, claimed that the security forces in Northern Ireland were 'strikingly unaware of the significance of what they were doing' – a patent nonsense – much valuable confirmation of Professor Daly's, Dr. Storr's and Dr. O'Malley's findings was presented by Mr. Brendan McGann, Director of the Institute of Psychology in Dublin, Dr. Inigo Fischer, Director of the Behavioural Studies Unit at University College, Dublin, and Mr. Brian Glanville, Director of Psychology of the Eastern Health Board. They had interviewed and tested five of the SD victims and confirmed that long-term after-effects were present. Mr. McGann made the point also that whereas in the early days after the men's release from Long Kesh in 1972 the Southern government had been only too willing to help, there had been in 1973, 'a change in the political climate in the Republic'. Their work into the personality changes experienced by the men had run into serious difficulties. 'When we mentioned the nature of the study, nobody wanted to have anything to do with it.' Supporting him, Dr.

Fischer claimed that 'we feel it is absolutely necessary that there should be a follow-up of all persons who have had the in-depth interrogation. As psychologists, because our techniques are being used, and particularly to the detriment of people, we must make a very strong protest.'^[17]

As a result then of the 26-Counties government's recent cordial relations with the British government, despite the Littlejohn Affair and the car bombs in Dublin at the end of 1972, virtually all research into after-effects of SD has stopped in the Republic of Ireland, though research from the interrogators' standpoint of course continues. [See the next chapter for examples.] And, as has been pointed out, the British government has continually refused permission for responsible independent scientists to visit the 'guineapigs' still in Long Kesh.^[18]

In researching this book I have, however, spoken to six of the men concerned. I am not a doctor, nor do I have any psychology credentials, bar a one-year course at university; but I have read widely on SD research and techniques, and interviewed doctors and psychiatrists fully conversant with symptoms and after-effects. Of the six SD victims to whom I have talked, it is obvious even to a layman that at least four have been badly affected. Only two appear to have made an almost total recovery, two years after the experience, and even they are prone to violent nightmares and migraine headaches. One of the other men has had periodical blackouts – once when he was behind the wheel of a car – and has lost all his powers of concentration. He hates to talk about his experiences, but once he starts has an uncontrollable urge to keep on talking about them for hours. Another man has a bad facial tic and is obsessive about 'his case', which his lawyer is bringing for compensation. Two of the men still have trembles in their hands. And, as mentioned before, another has had to be admitted for a spell (two months) to a psychiatric hospital.

These men have been the victims of a callous and sadistic experiment. As yet, not one has received any compensation whatsoever.^[19] On the contrary, they have been vilified and slandered by men like Carrington and Maudling. In the past it has been said of the British Empire that the sun never set on it, and the blood never dried. Now that she has been deprived of her Empire the British government, and her agents the British Army, must divest themselves of their callous colonial state of mind. In the Guardian Peter Jenkins wrote a piece after the Compton Report condemning interrogation in depth and stating that what might have been acceptable treatment of people in Aden was unacceptable in Birmingham or Leeds.^[20] It is, apparently, acceptable in Belfast. It should not be. In Belfast. In Aden. In Buenos Aires. In Moscow. In Athens. In Madrid. Anywhere.

'He jests at scars that never felt a wound.'

SHAKESPEARE. *Romeo & Juliet*.

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Throughout this chapter I have followed Professor Daly and Mr. McGann's decision and not named the men suffering from specific after-effects. This is an attempt not to make any recovery they may make any more painful for them. The sceptical or the hostile may attempt to claim that this detracts from any 'scientific validity' this chapter may have. So be it. They have not seen the men involved. The above-mentioned doctors and I have.

Footnotes Chapter 8:

1. Statements made in the House of Commons, 17 November 1971.
2. Some psychiatrists have subsequently been making a healthy living – \$16.80 a case is the figure

quoted – doing tests on the caged inmates of Long Kesh. Indeed, psychiatrists are not the only ones to profit from Long Kesh. Apart from the English and Scottish prison warders imported at great expense and paid considerably more than their Irish counterparts, there are the lawyers. At times they have protested about the ludicrous proceedings at the secret 'trials' but, as *Fortnight* magazine has pointed out (8 February 1974), 'a day's work at Long Kesh is worth a couple of hundred pounds'.

3. To widge: deliberately to draw conclusions totally at odds with the evidence hitherto presented – especially during what are termed 'whitewash operations'. cf. Lord Widgery of Bloody Sunday.
4. The British Society for Social Responsibility in the Sciences. Soon after the Compton Report, they published a memorandum urging the British government to abandon disorientation techniques. They stated that while Russian methods did not involve physical torture or complete SD, they still left 'enormous scars on the personalities of the sufferers'. 'There is no reason,' they went on, 'to suppose that the Ulster methods. shorter, though apparently more intense, than the Russian ones, would not leave comparable after-effects and there is some evidence to suggest that they would. Brainwashing and disorientation techniques overlap to a great extent. In the light of the psychological evidence and of the findings of the committee of inquiry, we urge the government to abandon the use of disorientation techniques during the interrogation of political prisoners.'
5. From an interview with the author, 12 September 1973. See also articles by Dr. Tim Shallice (*Cognition*, Vol. 1, No. 4, pp. 385-405), and Nicholas Wade (*Science*, 176 (1972), pp. 1102-5).
6. There is a strong suggestion from data such as those provided by EEGs (electroencephalographs) that the effects of SD depend critically upon how the subject conceives of the situation. Fear and uncertainty clearly exacerbate his state of mind. See C. W. Jackson and J. C. Pollard, *Behavioural Science*, 7 (1962), pp. 332-43.
7. Long Kesh saw its first suicide in May 1973, when Patrick Crawford took his life. There have been over a dozen cases of men being transferred to mental institutions.
8. H. P. Laughlin, *The Neuroses* (Butterworth, 1967).
9. F. Hocking, 'Extreme Environmental Stress and its Significance for Psychopathology', in *American Journal of Psychotherapy*, 24(1970), pp. 4-26.
10. see, for example, an article by Simon Hoggart in the *Guardian* of 6 May 1972.
11. Subsequently, the government of the 26 Counties, first under Jack Lynch and then under the Cosgrave Fine Gael/Labour coalition, has backpedalled rapidly on the question of indicting Britain for torture, brutality and flagrant breaches of the Human Rights Charter. Now they prefer to use the charges as a lever when they negotiate with Britain. Most observers believe that, just as the Greeks did over Cyprus, they will eventually accept a secret settlement and drop the charges. Despite this, attempts are still being made by various individuals, with the help of the NI Civil Rights Association, to raise other cases, much to the embarrassment of Sir Peter Rawlinson, Britain's representative at Strasbourg to say nothing of the irritation afforded to the Dublin government.
12. Article by Martin Huckerby in *The Times* of 9 June 1973. See also the *Irish Times* of the following day.
13. see 'Why Hooding is Mental Torture' in the *Sunday Times* of 21 November 1971.
14. *The Times*, 9 June 1973.
15. 'Packi' McNally was finally released on 18 December 1973, Shannon in January 1974. Joe Clarke was refused release on the grounds that 'since August 1971 he had frequently consorted with known Republicans'. Clarke's efforts to explain that the only way he could avoid doing that was to escape, which would have been illegal, were greeted with stony and hypocritical silence. He has just spent his third winter in Long Kesh. For further information on how people's alleged behaviour while imprisoned without charge or trial has affected their chances of getting out see *The Times* of 31 January 1974.
16. For a report, see Dick Grogan's article in the *Irish Times* of 8 October 1973.
17. For an interesting statement on the culpability of scientists and psychiatrists who allow their researches into SD to be used for the purposes of torture, see Dr. Shallice's article on *Cognition*, cit.

- cf. material from the BSSRS. op.
18. The long-term effects on men who have been tortured and held in concentration camps have been fully documented. See in particular the work of Prof. Paul Thygesen of the University of Copenhagen and Leo Eitingier of Oslo. Precipis of their work in English can be obtained from Amnesty International. Briefly, they conclude that after-effects are still present twenty years after the event.
 19. At last, some claims have been settled. See [Afterword](#).
 20. *Guardian*, 24 November 1971.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 9 Down on the Killing Floor

After the publication of the Parker Report in March 1972, much publicity was given to the government statement that the use of hooding, the noise machine and the SD process would be 'discontinued', less, much less, publicity was given to Mr. Heath's statement at the same time that although the hooding might not be used, he must 'make it plain that interrogation in depth will continue.'

This was not one of Heath's false pledges. 'Interrogation in depth', including many of the SD techniques, has continued. (So indeed has hooding, although it has only been on a very limited scale and not used apparently in conjunction with the allied techniques.) For the truth is that hooding and the 'white noise' are unnecessary. They represent 'overkill'. They were useful in an experiment. They were cheap – in the House of Commons it was admitted that the 'white noise' machine cost less than £1 to manufacture – and could be used even by untrained members of the RUC, not skilled in the subtleties of sophisticated interrogation. After the staff in Palace barracks had, by and large, discontinued the use of these more obvious trappings they resorted to an even more simple technique, which, nonetheless, still involved SD. From November 1971 they began to use, in a newly built compound of four huts, special sound-proof cubicles, with perforated acoustic tiles. Men were made to sit in a fixed position six inches from the wall and stare monotonously at the perforated tiles for anything up to thirty-six hours.^[1] 'Suspects' were not allowed to move their heads one way or another, on pain of a beating, and were often made monotonously to count the number of dots on the white tiles in the small cubicles. The effect of this is to induce hallucinations, both auditory and visual, after a few hours. Masking noise was often provided as an accompaniment as well as the shouts and moans of people being beaten near by. This is clearly a technique involving sensory deprivation, and the hallucinations were often severe.

Other interrogation methods are discussed elsewhere in the chapter, but at this point it is worth recording that after the concentrated SD experiments had been stopped, the armed services were still prepared to look for 'guineapigs', this time amongst their own personnel. On 11 April 1973 *The Times* reported that 'a number of naval officers may find themselves spending their weekend being interrogated like one-time IRA suspects in an exercise beginning on Dartmoor tomorrow. Several hundred will be taking part in the exercise against Royal Marines. Those who are captured will be subjected to interrogation techniques they might be expected to come up against...'

Nor was Britain alone in subjecting her own troops to 'ill-treatment' or torture. In November 1971 during a NATO exercise in eastern Belgium involving Belgian, Dutch, British and American troops a number of 'captured' Belgian troops were tortured for two days in a barn. They were kicked in the face, subjected to electric-shock treatment and left hanging from the rafters of the barn in sub-zero temperatures. Subsequently a year later (20 November 1972) six Belgian commandos were found guilty of torture at a Liege court and given suspended sentences, ranging from sixteen days to a whole five months. The commandos in one statement claimed that special British forces had helped instruct them.^[2]

The West Germans in particular have been paying especial attention to Sensory Deprivation. Despite

many protests and a complaint to the European Commission of Human Rights at Strasbourg they have continued to build special 'silence wings' where all sights, sounds, and signs of the outside world are excluded by baffles and shutters over the cell windows. Several members of the Baader-Meinhof group have been held in these special wings, where the only sound is that of one's own heartbeat. One girl, Monika Berberich, has been held for three years in solitary without even being sentenced. Defense lawyers are claiming that the German authorities are using solitary confinement and SD techniques to break alleged members of anarchist groups and that these techniques have been learned from the British experiments in Ulster.^[3]

From the introduction of internment in August 1971 allegations of torture and brutality by the Army and police began to mount. Torture is an emotive subject. As Amnesty International can testify, the majority of people prefer to ignore it, finding it 'distasteful' or too 'upsetting'. Moreover, the British public, while quite prepared to accept grotesque and horrific accounts of torture carried out upon political opponents of the totalitarian regimes in Greece, Brazil, Russia, South Vietnam, Turkey, etc., by the authorities, are much more reluctant to credit that their own government could ever be party to such a thing. After all, is this not a free democratic country, and are not our soldiers and policemen not only wonderful, but the envy of all other nations? Unfortunately, the answer is 'No!' For too long has the public deluded itself with these comfortable myths, which the media has felt obliged to spread.

This is not to say that the British Army and the RUC Special Branch are full of vicious thugs, sadists and torturers. Such a claim would be nonsense. Nonetheless, the 'few bad apples' excuse put forward by apologists when incontrovertible evidence of torture is produced is equally far from the truth, which is, that the British Army and the security forces, like any other army in the world, is conditioned and trained to institutionalized violence.

Since 1971 there have been over 250 individual cases alleging torture during interrogation and many of these have been documented and supported by such widely disparate organizations as Amnesty International and the International League of Rights for Minorities (both of which organizations have consultative status with many international bodies), the National Council for Civil Liberties, the Association for Legal Justice and the Campaign for Social Justice. Moreover, several reputable newspapers, such as the *Guardian*, *The Times*, the *Observer* and in particular the *Sunday Times* have all documented, with medical evidence, clear cases of torture. So too has the Granada TV programme 'World in Action'.

Some of these allegations may be false. Some are conclusively not, according to the medical evidence. Moreover, it is worth remembering that this figure of 250 does not take into account what the police would call 'the dark figure', i.e., those crimes about which no one complains. The reason for the existence of 'the dark figure' is simple. Hard experience has taught the working-class people of the cities and towns that not only does it do no good to complain about Army brutality or torture but it may be positively dangerous, since one is liable to be continually harassed by the soldiers or police against whom the allegations have been made.^[4]

There are many techniques which have been used by the Army and the RUC interrogators since 1971 and nearly all of them involve some facet of the SD treatment, such as wall-standing, lack of sleep, restricted diet, etc. but since the full-scale experiments in August and October 1971 were concluded, in general more traditional methods have been used. The most common are simple beatings, generally administered with fist and boot, though weapons or blunt instruments have sometimes been used. Particularly common abuses include twisting of arms and legs, hitting or squeezing genital organs, kicking of shins and legs and blows to the stomach, chest and kidneys while in the search position.

Fathers Faul and Murray have listed the 'Twenty-five Principal Methods of Torture used in Holywood and Girdwood Barracks':

1. Placing a man in 'search position', single finger of each hand to the wall, legs well apart and well back, on the toes, knees bent, for prolonged periods;
2. heavy punching to the pit of the stomach to man in 'search position';
3. kicking the legs from under a man in the 'search position' so that he falls to the ground, banging his head on the wall, radiator or ground;
4. beating with batons on the kidneys and on the privates in 'search position';
5. kicking between the legs while in the 'search position'. This is very popular among the RUC officers and they often do it for periods of half an hour or an hour;
6. putting a man in 'search position' over a very powerful electric fire or radiator;
7. stretching a man over benches with two electric fires underneath and kicking him in the stomach;
8. rabbit-punching to the back of the neck while in 'search position';
9. banging the head against the wall;
10. beating the head with a baton in crescendo fashion;
11. slapping the ears and face with open hand;
12. twisting the arms behind the back and twisting fingers;
13. prodding the stomach with straight fingers;
14. chopping blows to the ribs from behind with simultaneous blows to the stomach;
15. hand squeezing of the testicles;
16. insertion of instruments in the anal passage;
17. kicking on the knees and shins;
18. tossing the prisoners from one officer to another and punching him while in the air;
19. injections;
20. electric cattle prod;
21. electric shocks given by use of a machine;
22. burning with matches and candles;
23. deprivation of sleep;
24. urinating on prisoners;
25. psychological tortures:
 - (a) Russian roulette
 - (b) firing blanks
 - (c) beating men in darkness
 - (d) blindfolding
 - (e) assailants using stocking masks
 - (f) wearing surgical dress
 - (g) staring at white perforated wall in small cubicle
 - (h) use of amphetamine drugs
 - (i) prisoners are threatened; threats to their families, bribes offered, false confessions are used.^[5]

These allegations are backed up in many cases by independent medical evidence. Palace barracks, Holywood and Girdwood barracks, Belfast, were the main 'interrogation centres' but torture and brutality were also carried out at Ballykelly RAF-Army barracks, Gough barracks in Armagh, a police centre in Newry, and in Belfast, at Black Mountain military barracks and in the Grand Central Hotel, now an Army billet and screening centre. Most of the alleged tortures or brutalities are fairly standard – though no less bestial for that; but there are several of interest which appear to have been used for short periods, on an experimental basis. and it is worth briefly examining some of these.

Firstly, electric-shock torture. Much used by interrogators in Brazil, Greece, South Africa and by the

French in Algeria, this seems to have played only a very marginal role in Northern Ireland. Many interrogators, according to Amnesty International, use this method since it leaves very few marks and therefore is hard to prove, but in Northern Ireland there are few instances of its use. Nonetheless, it has been used, mainly in the period November 1971 to February 1972. In particular, in the third week of January 1972, five men claimed that they had been given electric shocks by men disguised as doctors, complete with green masks and surgical robes. The tortures all occurred within two weeks and were all alleged to have taken place at Palace barracks. After the by then routine beatings the men – who were unknown to each other – were questioned and then threatened with 'the mad doctor'. When they still didn't give the desired answers to the questions they were taken into another room. Two men with Belfast accents came in and blindfolded them. They then had a wet bandage tied round their wrists and forearms and were subjected to electric shocks for up to an hour; by then, the five of them were prepared to 'confess' to anything. Subsequently these men were seen by Surgeon Lane of the Mater Hospital, an expert on electrical medical therapy. Though at first sceptical, he found their stories convincing and detailed, and concluded that they were telling the truth.

A storm of protest broke out and after representations by Cardinal Conway and the Dublin Foreign Ministry, Whitehall reluctantly had to take notice. The men's solicitors complained to the Director of Public Prosecutions, who dismissed the allegations as 'propaganda' until the government's lawyers in Ulster reported that in fact the allegations were true. The matter was hushed up. One man was interned, one was jailed for trying to escape and the Crown entered a *nolle prosequi* at the trial of the other three men, who were released. When Whitehall finally did realize that the allegations were true they claimed that 'a small group of Belfast SB men were experimenting with their own ideas and without approval from on high'. Heath personally ordered that there must be no repetition of the electric-shock treatment.^{[\[6\]](#)}

Whenever incontrovertible medical evidence of torture was presented, the Whitelaw administration acted in accordance with traditional British policy. First, they denied the claims and dismissed them as 'propaganda'. When this did not suffice they would privately admit to 'respectable leaders of the community', like Cardinal Conway or the SDLP politicians, that the atrocity had occurred, but blame it on 'a few bad apples'. Promises would be made to deal with these men, but in fact none were dismissed and only two were ever charged. Whitelaw would then 'explain' to the complainants that it was 'impossible to control over-enthusiastic troops at ground level' all the time and that therefore 'occasional excesses' must be expected. This of course was nonsense, as the government itself proved when they effectively ordered the suspension of torture from May 1972 until Operation Motorman on 31 July 1972. During this period, when the government was seeking a ceasefire and an agreement with the Provisional IRA, no instances of torture were reported. Following the breakdown of the abortive truce and the invasion of the 'no-go' areas after Operation Motorman, the restrictions on torture were lifted, and according to the NCCL 'the wall of official silence was re-erected'.

But electric-shock treatment was not the only 'experiment' undertaken by zealous interrogators, intent on brushing up their techniques. The ALJ report isolated cases of the Falanga (beatings of the soles of the feet with heavy rods) being used, and also the water torture. The latter appears to have been used only during the months of October and November 1972 at the Black Mountain Army post and at the Grand Central Hotel. Two of the victims, Liam Holden and William Parker, told how they had had water poured slowly through a towel over their faces until they felt themselves suffocating. This is of course a well-known torture used in particular by the French in Algeria and the present military regime in Greece. After a lengthy treatment of this kind, Holden 'confessed' to shooting a soldier in Ballymurphy. In most cases where the sole evidence against a man has been his own alleged 'confession', the judges in Northern Ireland have thrown the cases out of court and the Special Branch have been content to arrest the acquitted man as he tries to leave the court and send him to the detention camp at Long Kesh. In Holden's case, however, he was convicted as a result of his 'confession' and sentenced to death. He was reprieved following the reprieve of UDA man Albert

Browne, who had been convicted of shooting a policeman.

The other main experiment in the interrogation process involved drugs. Some thirty cases involving alleged administration of drugs are listed by Fathers Faul and Murray and the ALJ, but in some of these cases the information is scanty. Three in particular, however, are well documented – indeed the cases are due to be heard at Strasbourg – and occurred at roughly the same time. The first concerned Francis McBride of Rasharkin who was arrested near his home on 13 April 1972 and taken to Ballymoney police station. There he alleges that after being beaten – his doctor has testified to the physical marks left on him – he was given a cup of tea. Soon after, he felt dizzy and began to hallucinate. He was denied anything else to eat or drink. No proof exists that McBride actually was drugged, but the symptoms of which he complained fit in very closely with those experienced by two Newry men seventeen days later. On 30 April 1972 Tony Keely and Tom Kearns were both arrested on the road out of Newry and taken to the local RUC barracks. Both men knew each other, but neither had any connection with McBride. After receiving a beating – Dr. McAteer of Newry subsequently confirmed that the marks on Keely conclusively pointed to 'a very brutal assault' – they were separated, interrogated, and each given a cup of tea. Keely claims that soon after this he 'felt dizzy, couldn't urinate, experienced extreme dryness of the mouth, and mental disorientation', all symptoms compatible with an overdose of amphetamines. Kearns had similar symptoms, as well as shivering fits and hallucinations, for almost twenty-four hours. At this juncture the local police seem to have acted foolishly – from their point of view – for they released Kearns after the twenty-four hours was up. Still confused and bewildered, he went to the doctor. Dr. McAteer was puzzled by his symptoms and as a precaution took a urine sample, which he had analysed at the City Hospital in Belfast. There it was discovered that when tested the specimen proved positive for amphetamine traces. The exact drug used has not been established – it could be any one of a wide variety, but clearly Kearns and Keely had been drugged. These three drugs cases have now been submitted to the international court at Strasbourg. Allegations that several men were given LSD have, however, proved impossible to verify.

It would seem likely that the use of drugs, and amphetamines in particular, were the idea of a small group of RUC men of investigative bent, rather than part of a carefully conceived experiment, for if the latter were the case, the opportunities clearly existed for much more concentrated and scientific tests, using much more sophisticated drugs, provided by the Drug Squad, than those obtainable by local Branch men themselves. And this does not appear to have occurred. Moreover, the drugs used clearly had unpredictable results. Whether they or the beatings used were responsible for the three men's 'confessions' is impossible to say. Perhaps the policemen involved were content with the sentences passed on the three men on the basis of their 'confessions', perhaps not.^[7] At any rate they appear for the time being to have discontinued the process.

Torture and experimentation in interrogation techniques, although the prime concern of this book, are by no means the only field in which the British Army has used the Northern Ireland situation to modernize its tactics during the past four years. Firstly, there is overall strategy. Britain's foremost 'counter-terrorist strategist from the fifties has been Sir Robert Thompson, who, as previously mentioned, had been largely credited for British successes against the Communists in Malaya. As recently as 1972 he was publishing books on how to fight Communist Revolution.^[8] He has been primarily concerned with rural guerrilla warfare, however, and moreover, since the defeat of American policies in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, his reputation may have declined. As the last sixties saw the rise of formidable urban guerrilla movements such as the Tupamaros in Uruguay, the IRA in Ireland and the short-lived but politically embarrassing Weathermen in the United States, more and more government and military experts have been concentrating on the most effective ways and means for a government to control those sections of its people who are not prepared to accept central government control, be it 'Communist' or 'democratic'. While would-be revolutionaries could read a wide spectrum of works from Lenin, Trotsky, Bakunin, Guevara, Mao, Giap,

Fanon, Marighella and Grivas on the theory of revolution to an equally wide range of 'do-it-yourself' manuals on arms and explosives, from where was the dedicated British Army office to get his guidance? Certainly he could read the publications of American government officials and military 'experts', but what about more local works? Books like *Protest and the Urban Guerrilla* by Major-General Clutterbuck^[9] or *Subversion* by Ian Greig of the Monday Club and South Vietnamese Embassy^[10] would not be of any use to them, obsessed as they were with 'international anarchist and Communist conspiracy' and sprinkled with gross inaccuracies. Clearly a serving, experienced military man was needed. Enter Frank Kitson.

A successful Army career in Kenya (where he 'blackened up' and went out in the bush to form 'pseudo-gangs' of informers and deserters to hunt down the Mau Mau), in Malaya, in Cyprus and in Muscat and Oman led Kitson in 1969 to Oxford University where he received a grant to write his idea of the definitive British officer's textbook – *Low Intensity Operations*.^[11] The authorities seem to have been pleased with the book. Kitson was sent to Northern Ireland in the spring of 1970 and although only a Brigadier he was for two years, until April 1972, the Army commander in Belfast. Thus, although the youngest man in the Army to hold a Commander's post, he was given the toughest task, and his two years there were to see many 'innovations' in the British Army.

Kitson's book was acclaimed in military circles on its publication in 1971. The lay reader, if he could get his hands on the book (it cost £4), might have been less enthusiastic. What emerges after ploughing through the book is a picture of an ambitious career officer, itching to get to grips with what he envisages as 'the enemy' but frustrated by the old-fashioned traditions and bureaucracies of the Army. Kitson virtually admits to seeing Northern Ireland as a testing ground. The real trouble, he tells us, will come in Europe in the second half of this decade. He seems not to have heard of Suez, or recall British debacles in Cyprus and Aden, for he still has the outmoded and slightly ridiculous idea of Britain as one of the 'world's policemen: 'We still have a peacekeeping role all over the world,' he proclaims.

As to the threat of internal subversion, be it from the IRA or the Angry Brigade, in 1969 he plainly felt that the Army was totally unprepared and ill-equipped to deal with these challenges. In order to be able to handle the potential situations envisioned by Kitson, they would have to move into a number of fields which the average British citizen might not hitherto have imagined as part of a 'peace-time' Army's role, ranging as they did from 'town planning' and 'community relations' to assassinations and bombings.

The latter aspects of the Army's role in Northern Ireland are of course necessarily shrouded in secrecy. The Army can hardly be expected to admit that groups of their men, albeit a small elite minority, have shot unarmed civilians and bombed civilian property. Equally it is only to be expected that both wings of the IRA would allege that they had done this, whether or not in point of fact they had. However, evidence has come to light which, although perhaps only the tip of the iceberg, would tend to involve Army personnel in such activities. As a result of inquests and court cases the Army have admitted that plain-clothes squads of their men known as MRF squads (the Army states that the initials stand for Military Reconnaissance Force, its opponents that it is known as Military Reaction Force) have shot dead at the very least two men, Patrick McVeigh (12 May 1972) and Daniel Rooney (27 September 1972) and wounded at least five other men in separate incidents. A sergeant, Clive Graham Williams, who described himself as 'commander of a unit of the MRF attached to the 39th Infantry Brigade' admitted that part of his duties were to drive in plain clothes with two or three other men in a civilian car, armed with automatic pistols and a Sterling sub-machine gun, through Catholic areas. On 22 June 1972 his unit had a Thompson sub-machine gun – hardly standard British Army issue – and ammunition which they claimed had been given them by the RUC SB at Castlereagh. As their car came down the Glen Road in Andersonstown they fired a burst from the Thompson, wounding three taxi-drivers as they stood by their cabs, and a fourth man who was asleep in his bedroom when the bullets pierced the walls and hit him. The subsequent court case (27 February 1973) saw charges of unlawful possession of a Thompson being dropped against Captain McGregor, of the Parachute Regiment, and a

remand on bail for Williams. Williams was subsequently acquitted by a Belfast jury in June 1973 after he claimed that his plain-clothes patrol had been fired on. No evidence was produced such as bullet-holes in the car or forensic evidence to indicate that any of the taxi-drivers had fired a gun.

This is just one of the cases involving MRF men which has come to light.^[12] In addition we have had the Four Square Laundry Affair, where the Army has admitted setting up a fictitious laundry service to tour Catholic areas touting for custom at cut rates. The clothes could then be subjected to forensic tests and returned next week. Regular runs would also provide an opportunity for observation of particular suspect houses. The Army was forced to own up to this undercover operation when a Four Square Laundry van was ambushed in the Twinbrook Estate in Belfast on 20 October 1972 by the Provisional IRA. The Army admitted to losing one man, Sapper Ted Stuart, but the Provos claimed three soldiers shot dead in the van and two at the massage parlour used by the 'laundrymen' as their HQ (another useful cover). Again, it does not take too much imagination to conceive that this abortive Army operation was only one of several carried out by Army Intelligence Squads. In 1973 further evidence of this came with the revelations that a squad of women agents were travelling around Andersonstown posing as lipstick saleswomen.

How does this all square with Kitson and his theories? Remarkably well, in fact, and Kitson was almost certain the man responsible for the introduction of MRF units to Belfast.^[13] In his book he had spoken of the need for rapid grass-roots intelligence-gathering and stated that

an effective way of dealing with this problem would be to establish a unit which could carry out the two separate functions of setting up or reinforcing the intelligence organization and of providing men trained in operations designed to develop information by special means. If a unit of this kind were formed the element designed to set up or reinforce the intelligence organization would consist of a number of officers available to move at short notice when needed. These men would be majors or captains and they would be backed by a number of other ranks to act as drivers and clerks. The unit could be a relatively large one, in which case there might be three or four groups each consisting of a major and several captains, the major being intended for development to a provincial or county intelligence headquarters, and the captains to districts; a unit of this size would be commanded by a lieutenant-colonel or senior major [p. 191].

Details later in the book reveal that teams would consist of cells, comprised of younger men, ready for all kinds of action. These sound remarkably like the MRFs which the Army has had to admit it is using, although for the most part of course their activities, like that of the SAS, have been subject to D-notices, forbidding the press even to acknowledge their existence.^[14] Earlier in his book some would say that Kitson had implicitly sanctioned assassinations by the Army, although it can be claimed that the passage in question is open to various interpretations.^[15] In the light of the Army's admitted activities, however, it seems that this is the most obvious one. To some it would appear that Kitson has a contempt for the law of the land. In a clear reference to the affairs existing in Northern Ireland when he wrote his book he states:

There are two possible alternatives, the first one being that the law should be used as just another weapon in the government's arsenal, and in this case it becomes little more than a propaganda cover for the disposal of unwanted members of the public. For this to happen efficiently, the activities of the legal services have to be tied into the war effort in as discreet a way as possible which in effect means that the member of the government responsible for law either sits in the supreme council or takes his orders from the head of the administration. The other alternative is that the courts should remain impartial and administer the laws of the country without any direction from the government.

Before the imposition of direct rule the positions of Minister of Home Affairs and of Prime Minister were held by the same man, first Chichester-Clark, then Brian Faulkner. The infamous Special Powers Acts were, and still are, in force and the judiciary had an abominable record of sectarian bias.^[16] Clearly an ideal climate in which to put Kitson's ideas into practice.

As for deliberate bombings carried out by the Army, there is less hard evidence, despite the numerous allegations emanating from the Catholic ghettos. But surprising confirmation of some of the allegations has

come from an unusual source. The 1 November 1973 edition of the *Ulster Loyalist*, which gives a contact address at the UDA HQ on the Shankill Road, made some remarkable admissions in an article warning Loyalists about being 'planted' by the British soldiers. Under the heading 'Protestant Civil Rights' the author claims among other things

that the British Army will deny that they have planted ammunition on people. They will also deny that they have ever asked Protestants to supply them with a few rounds of ammunition that are not on issue to the British Army, so that they could plant them in suspected IRA men's houses during a search. We have a list of people who have been approached in this manner, and we also have a list of the soldiers who approached them. There have even been a few occasions when the British Army has planted *BOMBS*. We have proof of this, but in submitting this proof we could endanger *the people involved with supplying the bombs*.

Clearly this is not proof, but it is a most remarkable allegation to come from a Loyalist organization. The SAS's experience with bombs during the Aden campaign clearly established a precedent.^[17]

Kitson's obsession with 'low-level intensity' intelligence-gathering has recently led the Army into many unaccustomed fields apart from MRF-type operations. Typical of these have been 'community relations' projects. In an attempt to emulate the American strategy of 'hearts and minds' the Army has become involved in children's ad-venture playgrounds, children's holidays, teenagers discos, community centre club building and even OAP Christmas parties and 'Silver-tops' clubs. All these activities are of course carried out before the clicking shutters of tame press photographers, whose editors are generally only too eager to record the humane and charitable work being undertaken by 'our boys in khaki'. All this is regarded as 'good publicity' by the Army, who milk the stories for all they are worth, even down to photographing the gallant soldier who rescued a goldfish after an explosion near a pet shop in Belfast's Smithfield Market area. Further, it gives the Army PROs at Lisburn more access to the press and media for feeding 'black propaganda' stories designed to discredit the enemy, for no matter how outlandish the story, once it has appeared as a TV news item or front-page story in one of the popular daily newspapers it has had an effect. The denial a few days later will generally be relegated to a few lines on an inside page.^[18]

But the 'hearts and minds' campaign had a more sinister role to play – that of an intelligence exercise. Kitson advocated for example that 'individuals can be sent amongst the community for the purposes of doing work which will help in making contact with the people. The sort of jobs which can be undertaken range from teaching to the setting up of playgrounds, advising on community centres and working on holiday schemes' (p.79). Organizations like the well-meaning Community Relations Commission can in this way be used as fronts and once the preliminary stages have been completed 'it should be possible to build up a picture of the relationships which exist between prominent individuals in the area' (p. 129). Operations like this have been carried on ever since the Army came to Northern Ireland in strength in 1969, though generally with little success, for a month's assiduous efforts by one 'community-relations-minded' major to build up a good impression in a ghetto area could be blasted overnight by one trigger-happy or panicky soldier, to say nothing of a riot squad or MRF patrol.^[19]

Nonetheless, in-depth planning is taken seriously by the Army, even down to its insistence on being involved in the planning of new housing estates, such as Twinbrook in Belfast, where there are only two entrances and two exits to the entire estate. Unable to do this to already-established estates, the Army has had to fall back on the tactic of occupying public buildings which dominate the area – such as schools, factories and sports grounds, for example Casement Park in Belfast, and using these as bases from which they can control an area. Semi-permanent and then permanent structures can then be built on the pattern of garrison forts in the midst of Indian territory.^[20] Allied to this have been numerous experiments in traffic control. The car-bomb campaign of the Provisionals, which was later copied by Loyalist extremists such as the UVF, has meant that the Army has sealed off large areas of the city centres of not only Belfast but the small towns of

the province as well. Motor-free shopping precincts have become the order of the day, although not even the erection of a large iron railings and gates, manned by soldiers who search everyone entering, has managed to prevent determined bombers from devastating city-centre targets. Coupled with this the Army has experimented with concrete ramps on many roads to slow down traffic, spiked chains to puncture tires and mobile road blocks.

While Northern Ireland has been a fertile testing ground for the British Army in all these aspects, one field in particular has really benefited – that of technology.

Since 1969 there has been a radical need for alteration in the weaponry of the British Army, much of which has proved far too powerful for use in heavily built-up areas. Guerrilla warfare is the 'war of the flea', and until recently the Army has been forced to use sledgehammers to crack nuts. The standard weapon of the British soldier is the SLR (self-loading rifle), a 7.62 mm. weapon based on-the Belgian FN rifle. a 20-shot, semi-automatic gun, it has a high performance rate but is basically unsuited to urban warfare. It is half as long again as the Armalite, which is favoured by the Provos, which makes sighting and firing from a cramped personnel carrier difficult. Its range of 2,000 metres is too great and, worse still, it is subject to accidental discharges since it can only be disarmed when cocked by removing the magazine, which few soldiers on patrol bother to do. As a result there have been numerous woundings and several killings amongst the ranks due to accidental discharges. Much more effective has been the old .303 Number 4 Lee-Enfield, especially when equipped with telescopic sights and Starlite light-intensifying night-sights; but these are only available to a few trained snipers in each battalion. Similarly the General Purpose Machine-gun has proved far too powerful a weapon for use in built-up areas.

Most of the vehicles used were also designed for different purposes. Land-Rovers, fitted with Macrolon fibre-glass upper body shells, are used to patrol less dangerous areas but, despite claims to the contrary, they have turned out to be far from bullet-proof and are not fast enough to catch speeding cars. The 5-ton Humber personnel carriers, known to soldiers and civilians alike as 'pigs', have proved to be vulnerable to Armalites, to say nothing of Russian RPG7 rockets, and have had to be reinforced with an inner layer of heavy steel plate. This has resulted in a marked tilt to the rear and a severe reduction in performance. Nonetheless the 'pigs' are still faster and more manoeuvrable than the 10-ton six-wheeled Saracens, with their slow acceleration and top speed of 40 mph. They are also equipped with a .30-inch Browning machine-gun which again is too powerful to use in densely populated urban areas. The large Saladin armoured cars, equipped with 76 mm. cannons, can be used in rural areas but they too lack mobility. Two-man, four-wheeled Ferret armoured scout cars are fast and manoeuvrable, but they tend to have very restricted visibility when the turret hatch is closed and if the observer travels with his head protected only by the plastic shield on top of the turret he is particularly vulnerable to the single-shot sniper. In addition the large exposed tyres on the Ferret, while excellent for travelling in rough open country, are, in the small back street, the petrol-bomber's delight.^[21]

Since 1969 when the Army virtually completely took over riot-control duty from the police new weapons have, however, constantly been developed. 1969 and the battle of Bogside saw the first sustained use of CS gas against a civilian population in the British Isles. The gas was used quite indiscriminately. The police had no experience in using CS – written instructions containing new orders on CS only became available in Belfast on the same day, 12 August, that the first gas was used in Derry. Indeed, Deputy Inspector-General Shillington was bringing the orders on the conditions for employing CS gas down to Derry himself as the first canisters were being enthusiastically fired by the exhausted RUC at the Bogside rioters. The first cartridges fired were standard cardboard canisters, based on a Porton design and containing about 12.5 grams of CS.

Later, gas grenades containing 50 grams were also used. As the battle raged, the Bogsideers used rocks and

petrol bombs and the police responded by firing more and more gas. Inevitably, far too much gas was used and it was the innocents in the houses, and in particular the very old and the very young, rather than the rioters, who suffered. The smell of gas hung over the small houses of the Bogside for days and many residents, especially very young children, suffered from nausea, diarrhoea, vomiting, skin irritation and blisters. Local doctors did their best to alleviate their distress, but were hampered by their lack of knowledge of the gas's properties, since this was its first real field-test on civilians.

Following reports of bad after-effects in the *Observer*^[22], and two days later in *The Times*,^[23] the government went through the face-saving ritual of setting up a committee to investigate the effects of the gas, under Sir Harold Himsworth.^[24] The report predictably enough stated that 'there is no evidence that CS gas has caused any permanent injuries to healthy people in the Bogside' – ignoring the many unhealthy and asthmatic men and women in the area. It was hastily produced and totally inadequate as later scientific investigators from the British Society for Social Responsibility in the Sciences found.^[25] Nonetheless, once launched, CS became a favourite anti-riot weapon for the troops until 1972.

Since then it appears to have fallen from favour, with the Army apparently preferring to rely on rubber bullets to deal with riotous crowds or even peaceful demonstrators. In July 1973, however, news was released of a new gas, CR, which had been developed by the Ministry of Defense. It has not as yet been used in Northern Ireland but has been authorized for use. Unlike CS it can be dispensed in liquid form – for example through a water-cannon – and is claimed to produce a more intense effect. Testing seems to have been, yet again, derisory. Professor Jack Mongar of the Pharmacology Department of University College, London, has stated that the government paper on CR, which appeared in an obscure journal called *Medicine, Science and the Law*, is 'pathetically inadequate'.^[26] Despite this, the Minister of State for Defense, Ian Gilmore, after claiming that CR 'caused short-lived sensations of acute pain to skin and eyes', went on, amidst Tory cheers, to refuse to give an assurance that it would not be used in Northern Ireland.^[27] Indeed, the Ministry of Defense has authorized its use in Long Kesh!

Another weapon which has not as yet been used on the civilian population in Northern Ireland but which has been field-tested on soldiers at Lisburn is the 'squawk box'. Despite Army denials, tests have been carried out and adjudged successful. The box is housed in a three-foot cube and can be mounted on a Land-Rover. It emits two virtually ultrasonic frequencies. When these mix in the human ear the hearer becomes giddy or nauseous and can even pass out. It is highly directional and can therefore be aimed at particular people in a row. The Army has thirteen of the machines, each costing £2,000.^[28] Also under consideration is the 'photic driver', which can even induce epilepsy. Publicity about this has been negligible, particularly since the firm which has developed the weapon, Allen International of London, was bombed in the autumn of 1973.

Even more controversial and widely used have been rubber bullets. These were first used in July 1970 and have been in almost daily use since internment day, 1971. They are six inches long and fired from short muzzle-loaded wide-barrelled guns. Intended as crowd-dispersal agents, they were supposed to be fired at thirty yards' range or so and to ricochet off the road into riotous crowds. Increasingly, however, they have been used by soldiers as a means of vindictively inflicting injuries from point-blank range. Although originally heralded as 'non-lethal' they have to date (November 1973) killed two schoolboys and blinded eight people, including a housewife, Mrs. Emily Groves, who was standing in her own living room, as well as fracturing skulls and causing severe internal injuries. Over 60,000 rounds have been fired by troops to date.^[29]

Attempts to replace them with 'baton rounds' made out of PVC have failed so far, since these tend to shatter on impact.

The Army's technology team at Lisburn has also come up with a wide range of new equipment to test,

including 'Goliath' the anti-bomb robot equipped with closed-circuit TV; 'Macrolon' amour-plating; and complex 'gelly sniffers'; but it is the border area which has proved most productive for the testers of new equipment. The 270-mile border between Northern Ireland and the Republic has proved very difficult to dominate. Despite road cratering, ever-increasing border patrols and the nightly activities of the UDR, the Provisional IRA were still able, at the end of 1973, virtually to come and go as the pleased, and had inflicted heavy casualties on the Army, UDR and RUC, particularly with landmines. Increasingly the Army has thrown in more and more new equipment. This has included helicopter-borne TV cameras (the helicopters used being Scout and Sioux models), miniaturized radar, special night visual aids, 'night sun' search-lights attached to helicopters, TV surveillance systems, infra-red alarm systems, new weapon sights and, eventually it was hoped, a new armoured personnel carrier. The special night visual aids include what the Army coyly called 'Twiggy', an overgrown telescope which magnifies available light which is invisible to the human eye. The one-man portable radar set used is code-named 'ZB 298' and is capable, the Army claims, of picking up the movement of men or vehicles at a maximum range of 10,000 metres, giving both audio and visual warnings (and also decreasing the life-expectancy rate of cattle in the border areas, as jumpy soldiers blast off with assorted hardware at nocturnal ruminants). The Infra-Red Alarm System, code-named 'Iris', has also been tried out in the border areas, but again, despite this massive display of technology, large areas of the border country remained firmly in IRA hands and Army casualties have mounted.

Northern Ireland has indeed been an ideal testing-ground for new Army equipment and theories. These have ranged from the above-mentioned hardware to Kitson and his 'dirty tricks department', reminiscent of the Watergate plumbers. As far as quelling the bombing campaigns of the Provos or the Loyalist UDA/UVF/UFF and their allies goes, they have had some successes and many failures. Despite the fact that nearly 700 men are interned without trial in Long Kesh or 'the Maze' as the authorities prefer to call it (and twelve women in Armagh), and over 1,000 men and women have been convicted of 'terrorist' offenses, the violence continues. And all the evidence points to a gradual withdrawal of British troops in the near future. If, as seems highly probable, the British do pull out without effecting any permanent solution to the 'Irish Question' they will have left behind them a legacy of suffering and misery, just as they did in the fifties and sixties when they pulled out of Kenya, Cyprus and Aden. Their economy will have suffered, their international reputation will have been even further tarnished – they have more complaints outstanding against them at the Human Rights Court of Strasbourg than any other country – but they will have gained, from the Army's point of view, some 'useful experience' 'down on the killing floor'. This may be small consolation to the relatives of the 1,000-plus who have died in the last four years, including well over 200 soldiers, but at least Frank Kitson may be satisfied – and he won't be alone, for, as conditions worsen economically in England, the police, confronted with such hiterto 'unenglish' phenomena as the Angry Brigade, Irish bombers, letter-bombs, incendiaries and violent strike pickets, have made it quite clear that, in the words of Superintendent Habershon, they 'are prepared to cut corners'. This polite euphemism means throwing the traditional Judges' Rules out the window, as, for example, was done in the case of the Winchester Eight, kept naked in their cells for days with no access to a lawyer or their families while they were 'interrogated'. Until now the English police have traditionally relied on bribery or a bit of casual brutality to obtain confessions; with the precedent set in Northern Ireland it does not seem improbable that more subtle and sinister techniques such as Sensory Deprivation may be used in the not too distant future, as Lord Richard Cecil, former Captain in the Grenadier Guards, urged when speaking to the Ulster Unionists in April 1974. In the same month a top-level conference was held at Lancaster University featuring Major-General Purdon, General Officer Commanding the North West, three Brigadiers, five colonels, nine lieutenant-colonels, seven Majors, three chief constables, one deputy chief constable, four assistant chief constables, six professors and an assortment of alleged counter-insurgency experts. Topics included 'Urban Guerrilla War', 'Ulster', and 'Theories of Revolutionary War'. Members of the Paratroopers and the Territorial

Army also attended. These meetings have become, over the last two years, 'a matter of routine' – as has the practice of training Army personnel in such jobs as engine-driving, manning power stations, coalmines and docks. But don't worry, there are still ten years to 1984.

Footnotes Chapter 9:

1. see, for example, the cases of Kevin Anderson, who was subjected to this treatment for thirty-six hours on 3-4 January 1973, and Michael Walsh. I have also interviewed several other men who have experienced this treatment. For several months it was common practice. The Northern Ireland Ministry of Home Affairs admitted on 28 January 1974 that such SD techniques had been used, when Jim Sullivan, a well-known Republican and Belfast councillor, was awarded \$2,400 in the Belfast High Court for illegal arrest, assault and mental torture. Sullivan had been arrested in October 1971 and, after being severely beaten, had been taken to Palace barracks, where he had been forced to stare at the acoustic tiles in the special cubicles until he began to hallucinate. The Ministry, nearly two and a half years later, did not contest the case and paid up.
2. Similar statements, albeit unproven, were made when in March 1973 the Bonn government ordered an inquiry into allegations that some German paramilitary Federal border guards had been systematically tortured as part of their training. The president of the police trade union said that on a training exercise in Bavaria attended by members of the American Special Forces, guardsmen had been tortured, subjected to continual cold showers, tied to trees by their genitals, etc. See *The Times* of 2 March 1973 and the *Guardian* of 12 March 1973.
3. For further information, see the *Sunday Times* of 3 February 1974, and *World Medicine* of 14 November 1973, which gives details of Preungesheim prison, opened in June 1973, where all the cells are specially fitted with acoustic devices designed to accentuate sensory deprivation.
4. For example, when Father Faul and Father Murray, the authors of *British Army and Special Branch RUC Brutalities*, produced no fewer than thirty-four detailed accounts of torture and named to the authorities during the winter of 1971 the officers allegedly responsible for such atrocities, the then Assistant Chief Constable of the RUC, W. Meharg, wrote to Frs. Faul and Murray informing them that 'these allegations will be investigated immediately'. (see also the *Guardian* of 21 January 1972). This 'concern' was echoed the next day (21 January 1972) by the Police Authority of Northern Ireland and by Major I.M. Walden, RM HQ Northern Ireland, who agreed that urgent investigation was called for. On 16 February 1972 the Chief Superintendent of the RUC confirmed that the complaints of seven men in particular were to be immediately investigated – by the RUC themselves! Nothing has come of these 'thorough investigation'. Altogether, between 1970 and 1974, 2,617 complaints were lodged against the police. 417 of these complaints were referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions. Only fourteen prosecutions ensued, and only three convictions. Not a single policeman was convicted of assault.
5. See *British Army and SB RUC Brutalities*. By January 1974 Castlereagh Road barracks had been replaced by the Springfield Road barracks as the most notorious 'interrogation' centre. Apart from the now-standard physical brutality, there has been a new development: the 'black room', where suspects, mainly teenagers and schoolboys, have been kept in isolation and complete darkness while tape recordings of people being beaten up are played through the walls.
6. *New Statesman*, 13 July 1973. For other accounts of the electric-shock treatment, see ALJ statements. There has also been the case of Ray Sands, aged 19, who was subjected to electric-shock torture at Andersonstown RUC station on 10 February 1973.
7. McBride got ten years for manslaughter. Keeley and Kearns each got two years for possession of arms.
8. See, for example, *Defeating Communist Insurgency* (Chatto & Windus, 1972).
9. Richard Clutterbuck, *Protest and the Urban Guerrilla* (Cassell, 1973).

10. Ian Greig, *Subversion: Propaganda, Agitation and the Spread of People's War* (Stacey, 1973).
11. *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency and Peacekeeping* (Faber & Faber, 1971).
12. For other cases, see *Political Murder in Northern Ireland*, by Martin Dillon and Denis Lehane (Penguin, 1973), pp.292-317.
13. *ibid.*, p.317.
14. For more details about the D-notice system. see Proinsias MacAonghusa in the *Sunday Press*, Dublin, 12 December 1971.
15. On p.7 of his book he says: 'As the enemy is likely to be employing a combination of political, economic, psychological and military measures, so the government will have to do likewise to defeat him, and although an army officer may regard the non-military action required as being the business of the civilian authorities, they will regard it as his business, because it is being used for operational reasons. At every level the civilian authorities will rightly expect the soldier to know how to use non-military forms of action as part of the operational plan, although once it has been decided to use a particular measure they will know how to put it into effect.'
16. For full details of the Special Powers Acts, see my book, [Internment](#), or the NCCL pamphlet of 1936 (reprinted 1972). The former also gives many examples of judicial bias, and this is confirmed by the statistical analysis in *Justice in Northern Ireland – A study in Social Confidence*, by Tom Hadden and Paddy Hillyard (Cobden Trust, 1973).
17. See also the strange case of ex-UDR man William Black, shot and wounded by Army personnel at his home near Saintfield on 26 January 1974. Professor Kennedy Lindsay and other Loyalist assemblymen have alleged that the Army has been trying to kill Mr. Black ever since he witnessed members of the SB stealing a car from outside his house. See *Sunday News* of 3 February 1974.
18. For more detailed evidence and examples of the Army's black propaganda squad, see [Internment](#), by John McGuffin (Anvil Press, Tralee, 1973), Ch. 15, also *Inside Story*, London. No.1, and *The British Press in Northern Ireland*, by Eamonn McCann (Socialist Research Centre, London).
19. Other examples of MRF behaviour, including the story of one of their members who deserted to the Loyalists in East Belfast, are given in *Andersonstown News* of 2 February 1974. This paper on 6 February 1974 also gave details of how information gained from a supposedly impartial academic research survey carried out by researchers from Queens University, Belfast, was being passed on to the Army and Special Branch.
20. For example, following Operation Motorman on 31 July 1972 no fewer than nine forts, nicknamed by such esoteric names as 'Silver City' and 'Apache', were built in the Andersonstown area of Belfast alone.
21. More information on the Army's weaponry in Northern Ireland is contained in an article in *Hibernia* of 3 September 1973.
22. 'Sixty Babies Ill from Riot Gas', by Gerald Leach, in the *Observer* of 24 August 1969.
23. 'Defence Ministry Concern at Ulster Riot Gas', in *The Times* of 26 August 1969.
24. *Report of the Enquiry into the Medical and Toxicological Aspects of CS (Orthochlorobenzylidene Malononitrile)*, Cmnd. 4173 (HMSO, October 1969).
25. For full data on CS gas and the Himsworth Report, see *The Battle of Bogside*. by Russell Stetler (Sheed & Ward, 1970); also *New Society* of 25 September 1969; and Dr. Norman MacDonald's article in the *Lancet*, 635 (20 September 1969).
26. *Sunday Times*, 11 November 1973. See also *World Medicine* of 14 November 1973. pp.7-8; *New Scientist* of 31 May 1973 and 8 November 1973; and the *Lancet* of 24 November 1973, which criticizes the government for releasing the new gas without sufficient testing.
27. Quoted in the *Belfast Telegraph* of 4 July 1973.
28. See *New Scientist* of 20 September 1973 and 27 September 1973; and *Irish News* of 10 October 1973.
29. 'As early as July 1971 the British Society of Social Responsibility in the Sciences protested against

their use, stating that 'it is in the nature of these weapons that they are indiscriminate and that their effect on different individuals will be highly variable ... Serious injuries [are] likely to result.' In the summer of 1972 four surgeons at the Royal Victoria Hospital gave the Army a comprehensive dossier on ninety victims injured by rubber bullets. The Army immediately declared it to be 'classified', and it was several months before the doctors were able to make the report public. Amongst other things, it shows that many of the victims were less than twelve years old. See also the *Sunday Times* of 27 May 1973.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Chapter 10

Postscript — Torture in the World Today

'Torture is an international menace. Though it may originate in a distant place, if we shut our eyes to it, it may spread and affect us. To know that torture exists somewhere and to remain silent is to encourage the torturers.
– Dr. Alexander Esenin-Volpin

Today, despite pious resolutions by the member states of the United Nations, torture is endemic. The British tend, however, to suffer from what Edmund Burke described as 'geographical morality' – we are quite prepared to be shocked by and to condemn torture in other countries while condoning its practice by the British authorities. In 1973 Amnesty International produced reports of torture in no fewer than sixty-nine countries. These included not only the most notorious totalitarian states such as Brazil, Greece, South Africa, Russia and Turkey but many smaller countries where hitherto the practice had been almost unknown. Of the South American countries, only one, Costa Rica, is apparently not using torture on its political prisoners, and Argentina, for instance, has no fewer than seventy-three different methods of torture in use, ranging from the quaint-sounding 'parrot perch' to the 'dragon's chair'. Electric-shock treatment is still used in countries as far apart as South Vietnam, Iran, Indonesia and Brazil. The list is almost endless.

Even many of those countries which do not allow torture within their own territories have become involved in training personnel in the 'arts' of torture and in supplying sophisticated equipment. Thus the United States sends its agents and equipment to service the military dictatorships of South America, from Argentina to Uruguay, and few of them meet the fate of Dan Mitrione.^[1] Similarly, American soldiers returning from Vietnam have confessed that they were given courses in torturing Vietcong suspects by their officers.^[2] Various British and French firms have admitted manufacturing and selling equipment whose primary function was its use in torturing people. In their defense they claimed that exports were good for trade.

But although torture is widespread there is today no country which is prepared to admit it regularly uses such methods. Whereas before the nineteenth century some countries publicly acknowledged torture as an instrument of judicial inquiry, today the administrations running the vast majority of countries where torture is practised will blankly deny any knowledge of it.^[3] Official inquiries are rare, and when they occur are mere whitewashes. And such is the worsening position in Britain. Newspapers like the *Guardian* will wax indignant about the torture carried out in South Africa and Greece (though at the same time carrying holiday advertising for both places) but will ignore what is happening, an hour's flight away from their offices, in Belfast. In 1971, as mentioned above, after the news had leaked out about the 'guineapigs', Peter Jenkins, one of the *Guardian's* reporters, wrote an article stating that while possibly ill-treatment might have been used on 'non-Caucasians' in Aden or Cyprus it was 'unthinkable' that it could be used within the boundaries of the UK.^[4] The same 'geographical morality' was expressed by Sir Norman Skelhorn, the Director of Public

Prosecutions, as recently as October 1973. When questioned at a meeting of the Harvard Law School Forum about torture in Northern Ireland, Sir Norman did not even bother to deny that it had taken place, instead claiming that 'when dealing with "Irish terrorists" any methods were justified'.^[5]

As Amnesty has pointed out, political stability and progress are two of the pretexts most often advanced to justify repression and torture, and each puts State planning before the rights of the individual. Moreover, as history has shown, governments do not achieve stability through torture: on the contrary, they provoke counter-violence which can lead to their downfall or at least ensure instability for years to come.

Regardless of this, torture should be condemned whether or not it leads to stability, for at least two reasons. Firstly, it is immoral. It cannot be morally justified since it is a crime against humanity. Those who would seek to justify it because of the acts of violence of those who oppose the State generally see themselves as strong supporters of 'law and order'. The demand that everyone must respect and obey the law, but they tend to fall into the fatal error of the American general who said of the Vietnamese village of Ben Tre, 'in order to save the village, we had to destroy it'. Similarly the apostles of 'law and order' destroy that very concept when they violate the law by torturing and brutalizing the opponents of the State.

The other chief argument against torture is its illegality. It is prohibited under every relevant international legal document. The Geneva Convention of 12 August 1949 forbids torture of all combatants whether the conflict is international or internal. Thus in a civil war situation no claim of domestic jurisdiction can be invoked by the factions involved to deny the international illegality of torture. Similarly, Article 5 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 of the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man, Article 5 of the Declaration of the Citizen's Rights in the Arab States and Countries, Article 7 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, and Article 5 of the American Convention on Human Rights all prohibit torture. Moreover, although the last three treaties do allow derogations from some of the rights in times of extreme threats of internal disorder, the right not to be subjected to torture is one from which *no* derogation is permissible.^[6]

Torture is therefore illegal in every country in the world. And yet it exists. The problem is one of enforcement. Worse still, wherever it exists and is not stamped out, it spreads. An example of this is the French in Algeria. In 1955 Mr. Williaume, a French civil servant was sent by the French government to investigate allegations of torture in Algeria by French military and police personnel. His report failed to condemn unequivocally the torture which he discovered did exist.^[7] As a result the torturers were granted a new lease of life and the period 1955 to 1962 saw torture spread like wildfire not only through Algeria, but into metropolitan France itself. Similarly in Northern Ireland, the failure of both the Compton and Parker Reports unambiguously to denounce torture and 'ill-treatment' has allowed these crimes to proliferate, though they have not, as yet, reached the levels they reached in France, nor have they yet spread to the English mainland.

As for Northern Ireland, there appear to have been six main reasons why torture was used by the Army and police.

1. To gain intelligence. Kitson believed that 'a great amount of low-level or background information is preferable in this context to a few high grade sources'. Torture helped to get information quickly.

2. To get 'confessions' which would lead to charges in the courts and thus help give the impression that with the numbers being hauled into court the Army and police were 'on top of the situation, Minor annoyances here were the tendencies of a few judges to throw these cases out of court, but in that event the prisoner was then detained as he left the court, and interned'.^[8]

3. To mete out summary punishment – torture was always more frequent after a soldier had been shot in the area.

4. To create a climate of fear in the area from which the arrested man came, which would lead to a weakening of local support for the guerrilla forces and an increase in the number of people in the area prepared to inform.

5. To create fear in the minds of the younger volunteers of the guerrilla forces so that if captured they would break quicker, believing that they were about to be subjected to the same kind of torture as their comrades had been.

Finally, there is often a sixth reason. The torturer must justify himself. As Sartre has put it, 'the purpose of torture is not only the extortion of confessions, of betrayal; the victim must disgrace himself, by his screams and his submission, like a human animal'. For the torturer's sake the victim must be degraded in order that he can be regarded as 'sub-human'; hence physical degradation, often concentrating on the victim's genitals, and abuse and vituperation. The torturer tries to convince himself that his victim isn't really a fellow human being. Consequently, tortures such as electric-shock treatment are highly regarded by most torturers, for they not only leave few marks but they also reduce the torturer's sense of guilt by allowing him the illusion that he is not responsible for the screams which are the 'fault' of the electrodes.^[9]

That Sensory Deprivation is a form of sophisticated torture cannot be denied. And yet one of its most insidious features is that compared with horrific accounts of beatings, electric shocks and weird torture instruments, it sounds comparatively innocuous. Few visible marks are left on the victim. Only his mind is scarred. But as Amnesty has pointed out:

It is because we regard the deliberate destruction of a man's ability to control his own mind with revulsion that we reserve a special place in our catalogue of moral crimes for techniques of thought control and brainwashing. Any interrogation procedure which has the purpose or effect of causing a malfunction or breakdown of a man's mental processes constitutes as grave an assault on the inherent dignity of the human person as more traditional techniques of physical torture.^[10]

Whether a man 'goes out of his mind' from the pain of needles under his finger-nails or from an electronically induced delirium, the final effect remains that of an unbearable sense of loss, not only of control but ultimately of identity. He becomes, in Sartre's words, 'detached from his real self'.

These techniques have been used, in controlled experiments, on members of the civilian population of Northern Ireland. There is no reason to suppose that the interrogation specialists at Maresfield will not, at some time in the future, use them on dissident members of society in England. Hitherto one of their most useful aids has been the apathy of the general public and the subservience of wide sections of the press. It is to be hoped that this situation will change radically in the near future. If it does not, they will clearly be able to escalate further the use of torture in the British Isles.

And the truth cannot be hid,
Somebody chose their pain.
What needn't have happened, did.'
W.H. AUDEN

Footnotes Chapter 10:

1. Mitrione, a torture expert who posed as an AID official. was executed by the Tupamaros on 10 August 1970.
2. Other examples include the torture 'seminar' held by the Americans in October 1969 in Rio de Janeiro for the benefit of members of the Brazilian army, who provided the political prisoners for the Americans to demonstrate their tortures on. Similar courses have been held in Georgia, USA, for seconded military officers from Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay and Brazil.

3. The decline in the West of moral standards in the last forty years has been alarming. For example, in the First World War the Russians didn't even try to interrogate captured German POWs. It wasn't the done thing.
4. Article entitled 'Aden or Brum', in the *Guardian* of 24 November 1971. Possibly Mr. Jenkins failed to realize that to most British soldiers the Irish are 'non-Caucasian' – 'white niggers' is how some of them describe the stereotyped 'paddy' that they expect to see.
5. For a report of the meeting, see People's News Service, 24 November 1973 (PNS's address is: 119 Railton Road, London SE 24).
6. i.e. according to Article 4 in the Covenant. Article 15 in the European Convention and Article 27 in the American Convention.
7. The report is available as an appendix to *Torture, Cancer of Democracy*, by Vidal Nacquet (Penguin, 1963).
8. For a list of such cases, see [*Internment*](#), by John McGuffin (Anvil Press, Tralee, 1973), pp.184-5.
9. For an insight into the mind of the torturer, see for example *Licensed Mass Murder: A Socio-psychological Study of Some SS Killers*, by Henry Dicks (Sussex University Press, 1972); also the work of Dr. Micheline Guiton on the psychology of SS officers in Nazi concentration camps, and of French paratroopers who engaged in torture in Algeria (to be found in the reports of the Scandinavian Regional Conference on Torture, 6-7 October 1973). In a similar way in Russia today the State 'rationalizes' that anyone who opposes any of its decisions must be suffering from some form of 'schizophrenia' and must therefore be committed to an asylum – and clearly mental patients can't have political status!
10. See the memorandum submitted to the Parker Committee, obtainable from Amnesty at 53 Theobalds Road, London, WC1X 8SP.

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Tailpiece

Some may feel that this account of British government experimentation in torture is biased and partial. The British people do not like to believe that 'their' government and 'their' Army are capable of such behaviour. They may like to imagine that the events described represent only unsubstantiated allegations from 'terrorists'. If anyone is still naïve enough to believe this, they would do well to consult the records of the Belfast High Court for 13 February 1974.

On that date Pat Shivers, the first of the 'guineapigs' whose claim for damages was heard, was awarded \$36,000 against the Northern Ireland Ministry of Home Affairs and the British Ministry of Defence for "false trespass, false imprisonment, assault and battery, torture and inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment." Neither Ministry offered any defence and in doing so they made a complete admission of their guilt. Nor did they defend themselves when on 20 June 1974 Gerry McKerr was awarded damages of \$24,000. Despite this, no member of the RUC Special Branch or the Army interrogation teams has been or ever will be charged with the torture of these men. Gerry McKerr is still (August 1974) in Long Kesh.

Afterword Author's Note.

The Guineapigs was finished in February 1974. Since then there have been various developments which the present publishers feel necessitate a final chapter to update the Guineapigs' story. I have divided this into four sections.

Section 1. — *The Strasbourg Case*

The European Commission for Human Rights, which meets spasmodically at Strasbourg is supposedly the highest court in Europe. A court where the individual can have recourse if he feels that the courts in his own country are inadequate or biased. It cannot exercise legal sanctions except for the most flagrant breaches – e.g. the Greek colonels – but it is supposed to exert 'moral suasion'. In practice, it does nothing of the sort.

Elephantine, cumbersome and subject to the machinations of its more powerful members, it is burdened with a bureaucratic structure which makes it practically impossible for the aggrieved citizen to get his or her case heard fairly or impartially, as the following two cases will illustrate.

Case No. 1 *Donnelly et al v The British Government.*

In April 1972, seven Irishmen, Gerard Donnelly, Gerard Bradley, Edward Duffy, John Carlin, Francis

McBride, Anthony Kelly and Thomas Kearns were savagely beaten by Special Branch detectives of the RUC and by soldiers in various 'interrogation' centres in the North of Ireland, the most notorious one being Springfield Road Barracks in Belfast. As the medical evidence was to show, in horrifying detail, two of the men nearly died as a result and the rest suffered terrible injuries, so bad that even police and prison doctors were prepared to testify on their behalf. After spending months in various hospitals and jails on remand, they were eventually acquitted of having committed any crime and released. Their lawyers decided, with the assistance of the Republic of Ireland's Government to take their case to Strasbourg.

FOUR YEARS LATER, the Commission, in an 86 page report, put out in May 1976 rejected their complaint "on technical grounds." They did not deny that the men had been tortured, nor did they deny that members of the RUC and British Army had been responsible, but decided that since some of the men had subsequently received financial compensation, the case was "inadmissible." In other words, the British Government was allowed to pay for the right to torture Irishmen. (To date, October 1980, the British have paid out over \$4,800,000 in compensation for injuries received while in police and/or army custody. As we shall see, to date, not one RUC man or soldier has served one day in jail for these crimes.)

The twisted reasoning of the Court in the Donnelly case, which baffled many legal experts throughout the world may not be quite so hard to understand when one realizes the following facts, however. The Secretary of the HRC was a Mr. Anthony McNulty, an Englishman who just happens to be a self confessed officer in British Military Intelligence. (He claims to have retired from the secret service when he took the job of HRC Secretary.) The President of the HRC at the time was also an Englishman, a Mr. John E.S. Fawcett. Angry European legal figures have demanded an explanation why these two men, holding the two most sensitive positions on the Commission were allowed to sit in on and indeed direct the proceedings against their own Government. As yet, there has been no reply, but the image of the HRC has been badly tarnished yet further.

Case No. 2 concerned the Guineapigs and the massive violations of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms by the United Kingdom Government in Northern Ireland. The allegations, which were made by the Irish Government covered the period August 1971 to March 1972. In simple terms the allegations were as follows:

- 1). That the Government of the U.K. was responsible for practices which constituted 'torture, inhuman and degrading treatment of arrested persons in N. Ireland.
- 2). That the Government of the U.K. was not a) justified in the introduction of internment in August 1971 and b) that it was guilty of discrimination in its application of internment, i.e., despite the violence from Protestant extremists, only Catholics were interned for most of the period.

The thirteen commissioners in Strasbourg accepted, reluctantly, that torture and inhuman and degrading treatment did take place. As a sop to the U.K. government they rejected the allegations concerning internment. Some comments are in order. The proceedings of the Commission are ludicrously slow. On no fewer than five occasions the U.K. Government was granted extensions of time limits set by the Commission. In view of the lack of co-operation which the U.K. Government afforded the Commission one can be sceptical about the reasons for such procrastination. Amongst other things. they hoped that a new Government in the Republic of Ireland might be induced to drop the charges in order to 'cement friendlier relations'. During the five years that the Commission took to report its findings, which finally appeared in September 1976, torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and general repression continued unabated on the streets of N.Ireland and in the police and army centres.

The cases between March 1972 and September 1976 were not of course covered by the Report, thus enabling Mr. Merlyn Rees to talk about the Irish Government 'raking up the past'. The innumerable delays in effect provided him with a smokescreen to obscure the fact that the torture was still going on.

The weaknesses of the Commission's powers should be mentioned also. These included:

- 1) Its inability to discover where the SD experimental torture was actually carried out. The U.K. refused to say, and throughout the Report 'the unknown interrogation centre' is all we get. (In 1974 I believed that the centre was at Palace Barracks in Holywood, I now tend to subscribe to view of Fathers Faul and Murray that it was more likely at Ballykelly Air Base in County Derry.)
-) Its failure to subpoena the torturers.
- 3) The success of the British Government in prohibiting its witnesses from replying to any questions concerning 'the five techniques.
- 4) The refusal of the British Government to give any information on the torture seminar held in N. Ireland in April 1971, nor about the various torture training centres in Britain. (More about them later.)
- 5) The refusal of the British Government to allow the victims to confront their torturers.
- 6) The accession to the British demands that part of the hearing be conducted at the isolated Soal Air Base in Stavanger in Norway.
- 7) The refusal of the British Government to submit copies of the interrogation records showing which police officer interrogated each particular witness and during what period.

These were serious obstacles in the way of discovering the full facts, and the Commission, lacking the powers to overcome them must be seen as a very imperfect instrument of justice indeed, and it is a serious matter that there are no worthwhile sanctions which can be applied to a powerful Government like Britain which authorizes torture. Even more seriously, those who have tortured have not been and will not be brought to justice. As one of the Guineapigs, Pat Shivers, said in a TV interview, "monetary compensation for the victims, which, anyway can never compensate them for their sufferings, is no substitute for a fair trial of the torturers."

* * *

Section 2. —

And what of the guilty men? The European Commission found the Government of the United Kingdom guilty of the inhuman treatment of prisoners in Northern Ireland under Article 3 of the Human Rights Convention. Despite this the British Government continued to conceal the identities of those members of the security forces who were directly responsible for the torture. In September 1976, after the Strasbourg Report, they claimed that 'some of the soldiers have been internally court-martialled by the army'. They refused to give any details, however, and denied that any special torture training courses existed. Both these statements are lies.

In 1974, although I was in possession of some of the names of the torturers I was unable, for legal reasons, to print them. I did manage to name Special Branch Chief Michael J. Slevin, who had been awarded a M.B.E. for his 'good work' and Special Branch man Harry Taylor as being two of the men responsible. As a result, myself and Penguin books received legal writs in April 1975. When, after consulting our lawyers we replied with the response "go ahead and sue", the matter was dropped and we heard no more of it.

When in October 1976 *Hibernia* (The Dublin magazine) decided, after analysing the European Commission's report, to name more of the torturers, strenuous efforts were made to suppress the article. Some details were, reluctantly omitted, but, nonetheless both *Hibernia* and *An Phoblacht*, the Dublin Republican newspaper, did subsequently publish the names of various of the guilty men. What follows is a condensation of their reports.

Palace Barracks, Holywood is a British army barracks used by the RUC to 'interrogate' suspects. The RUC officer in charge there between August and December 1971 was Special Branch Inspector S. H. Kyle. His deputy was SB Inspector Harry Taylor. Assisting were Inspectors Jackson and Browne, based in Andersonstown RUC station and the head of the Omagh SB Inspector Peter Flanagan (who was shot dead by the IRA subsequently). Amongst the Detective Constables selected by the Crown to give evidence about the torture were B.J. Wilson, A. Libey and D-Cs Morrison and McKnight. The Commission found that in Palace Barracks the torture was the result of 'an administrative practice' and not just caused by the over enthusiastic actions of a few thugs.

From the report it appears clear that members of the RUC Special Patrol Group (members of which have subsequently been convicted of sectarian murders), were employed to torture internees at the 'secret interrogation centre'. In 1971 the SPG was commanded by Superintendent J.I.C. Gilchrist, then based in Musgrave RUC station. (He has subsequently been promoted to being in charge of 'T' division in the notorious Castlereagh torture centre.) Other senior members of the SPG, most of which have been promoted, include Chief Inspector K. Patterson, Inspector Hood, Inspector R.A. Stewart, Inspector R.J.A. Catterson and Inspector Nichol, all stationed in Belfast, and Inspector D.J. Robinson (Derry) and Inspector N. Crowe (Armagh).

Albert Street Barracks was, according to the Commission, the scene of various tortures. It was under the command of Lt. Col. Richard Freeman Wallace. The Commission also threw up the name of SB man Samuel George McKinney, who has been frequently named by people claiming that they have been tortured, including Donnelly, Bradley and Duffy whose case was heard at Strasbourg. He is one of the few to be charged (twice) with 'ill-treatment' but has been acquitted.

Ballykinler camp where many of those interned on the 9th of August were held and beaten was supervised by Capt. Eric Ronaldson Bryson, ably assisted by Lieutenant Ian Roger Barton, and Staff Sergeants Smith and Love. The military doctor was Captain David Plant and in charge of 'interrogation' was Superintendent Magill.

The British witnesses before the Commission were identified only by code, but a study of the report makes it clear that one of the top men, variously identified as P0 17, P0 12B and 13B and who was questioned about the 'five techniques' was none other than Inspector S.H. Kyle. Though refusing to answer questions about the 'five techniques' as the British continued to euphemistically call the SD torture or the torture seminar held in Belfast in April 1971, Kyle did admit that members of the MRF, aka the SAS were present at Palace Barracks during the 'interrogations'.

Strongly associated with Kyle was PO 4B aka 14A aka 17C aka 2A and 12G – aka Harry Taylor. His deputy was Det-Constable Morrison, who is referred to variously as PO 4C, P0 2B, 12E and 17A. Constable B.J. Wilson was also heavily involved in the 'interrogations'. In 1974 he was charged with assaulting a prisoner but acquitted 'through lack of evidence'.

Officers who took part in the torture seminar in April 1971 and who have all been promoted rather than punished include Chief Superintendent C.H. Rodgers, and Superintendents W.J. Hood and Michael Slevin. Another deputy head of the Branch Ross Laird left the RUC and emigrated.

These are some of the key figures who were responsible for the torture of 'the Guineapigs' and of hundreds of other men and women arrested and 'interrogated' through the seventies. Readers of this book might also chose to consider that the politicians in charge, Edward Heath, William Whitelaw, Reginald Maudling and Brian Faulkner to name but a few should shoulder much of the responsibility, as indeed should those in charge of the newspapers and television networks who studiously tried to pooh-pooh the torture allegations

when they were first made and have consistently refused to document the continuing excesses in Castlereagh Barracks and in the H Blocks in Long Kesh camp. Nor should the medical profession, with a few honourable exceptions be exonerated. Without doctors the torturers work would have been made much more difficult, yet, to date, not one single doctor has been accused of prostituting his Hippocratic Oath by such august bodies as the British Medical Association.

* * *

Section 3. — *The Victims.*

On June 5, 1975 Sean McKenna died. On the death certificate the cause was recorded as 'heart attack'. In the funeral oration Ruari O'Bradaigh, President of Sinn Fein said: #8211; "Before 1971 Sean McKenna was a strong, healthy man, but after suffering at the hands of the enemy the great tortures to which he was subjected his time was marked. He started to die for Ireland at 4 am. on August 9, 1971." At the time of his arrest Sean McKenna, at 42 was the oldest of the Guineapigs. He was also one of those worst-affected. Following the experiment he was kept interned at Long Kesh, in a very bad state, for two years before being transferred to various psychiatric hospitals and finally released, only to die a year later.

Professor Robert J. Daly of Cork University, who carried out a five year study of many of the Guineapigs, examined McKenna four months before his death. "He had a feeling of impending fatal illness (a 'brain tumour' or a 'heart attack'), and had gross symptoms of anxiety. His EEG (brainwave test) and EKG (heart test) were however, normal. His blood pressure was 150/100. Other laboratory investigations were also normal."

Professor Daly also spoke of three of the other Guineapigs. "One 29 year old hooded man has developed Hodgkin's disease, of which there was no evidence prior to his arrest. (Hodgkin's disease is a rare form of cancer. It is still not curable but can be treated.) Another man has had surgical treatment for carcinoma of the skin which developed on one of his scars which he received on his leg while being 'interrogated in depth'. A fourth man has had colonic resection for suspected Chron's disease. He developed intense and chronic diarrhoea some three months after the 'interrogation in depth'. All the hooded men report disability to a greater or lesser extent and this has included outpatient and inpatient psychiatric treatment as well as treatment for medical illness."

Personality tests compared with the British norm showed the men to be "more affected by feelings and emotionally less stable and easily upset; shy, timid; suspicious, more apprehensive and self reproaching; worrying and troubled; undisciplined self conflict; more tense, frustrated, driven and overwrought." However, he went on to say, they showed no evidence of psychopathy; instead they appear as an intelligent, shy, conservative group."

The most frequently reported symptoms were increased nervousness, followed by startle reactions, subjective depressed mood, loss of energy, increased suspiciousness, appetite disturbance and reliving of the experience.

Professor Daly published his report, *five years* after the men's ordeal, at the annual meeting of the American Psychiatric Association at Miami Beach. Five years on the survivors were still suffering and yet the British Government were still quoting Reginald Maudling who claimed that "no detainee in NI. has suffered permanent lasting injury whatsoever, mental or physical", and Lord Balneil, then Minister of State for Defence, who proclaimed: "the basic fact is that there was no brutality, no torture, no brainwashing, no

physical injury, no mental injury." As Adolf Hitler said in 'Mein Kampf', "The great mass of the people will more easily fall victims to a big lie than to a small one."

That the British Government did not know about the deteriorating state of health of those Guineapigs interned in Long Kesh is, of course, a nonsense. They were frequently examined by Army doctors, blood tests were taken, psychiatric reports prepared and filed away. This was the follow up to the experiment. No medication was given to the men, apart from the ubiquitous handfuls of Librium and Valium which were periodically handed out to all the internees like 'sweeties'. Those of the men who were still in the camp in October 1974, when the internees rose up and burnt the camp to the ground and were then subjected to the notorious and top secret CR gas (which is banned in the U.S.A.) also had additional blood tests. Did they but know it at the time, all the internees were the first human Guineapigs subjected to CR gas in such quantities. Tests in America on rabbits dosed with CR revealed that they were suffering from severe respiratory diseases and serious blood poisoning.

And what of the 13 men who went through the experiment and are still alive? Pat Shivers was one of the first released. In February 1974 he was awarded \$36,000. He died in 1975. Archie Auld was released in 1972, in poor health and Joe Clarke, the youngest Guineapig in June 1974. Both had claims pending and were then rearrested and interned in December 1974, two days before they were respectively awarded \$38,400 and \$30,000 by the courts.^[1] That their re-arrest had nothing to do with them being a danger to the security of the state was clearly seen when they were released again after Christmas. It seems that the authorities had wanted them in custody in order to carry out more health checks on them to complete their experiments.

Francis McGuigan decided that he was tired of being a Guineapig. On February 7th, 1972, after spending just over four months in Long Kesh camp he became the first prisoner to escape from it, disguised as a priest, and successfully made his way over the border. In October 1976 he was awarded, 'in absentia', \$26,400 by the Belfast courts.

Gerry McKerr was still being held without charge or trial in Long Kesh when, in June 1974 he was awarded \$24,000. Along with Micky Donnelly (who eventually got \$27,000), he was one of the last internees to be released in 1975. Professor Daly referred to some of the men being 'almost paranoid'. McKerr had good reason. In January 1977 Loyalist would be assassins fired on him outside his home, narrowly missing and then, the next month, he discovered a booby trap bomb under his car. He has survived both attempts.

Kevin Hannaway, also held until 1975 was eventually awarded \$28,800. He now has Hodgkin's disease, smokes 80 cigarettes a day, suffers from black outs and amnesia and has also survived two assassination attempts, which have forced him and his family to leave Belfast and settle in the Republic of Ireland.

P.J McClean, who suffered some of the worst treatment is still involved in the N.I. Civil Rights Association. In January 1975 he received \$33,600 "compensation". As he says, "if someone offered me \$240,000 to go through it again I wouldn't take it."

The others, Rodgers, Shannon, Montgomery, Turley and McNally all eventually received between \$24,000 and \$27,600. In all, the taxpayer had to shelve out \$360,000. (Plus over \$4,800,000 for other victims of interrogators' 'excesses'. Many claims are still pending.)

The last word in this section goes to Joe Clarke, the youngest (then 19) of the men:

"I remember most the bad beatings. I couldn't bear the pain. When I was talking to my interrogators I thought I was talking to my brothers. It just drove me round the bend. I was very frightened of the hood. I can still sometimes smell it. It has a paraffin smell and sometimes when I'm working at cars the smell and fear come back to me. In the Kesh I couldn't sleep at nights because I kept having these nightmares about the beatings. I had to talk it out of my system, and

many, many nights two other lads would sit up with me all night – all night while I talked about it. I used to get into terrible depressions. I used to be very easy going, but I'm a lot more nervous now. I don't like sitting in one place for any length of time, I have to get up and move about. Sometimes (nine years later) I still have to talk it out of my system. One of the things that galls me most is that not one of the men who did these terrible things to us has ever been put on trial. They think that just by giving us a bit of money they can make it all go away. But it can't. It'll never go away.

Army training into 'psyops' (psychological operations), torture and sensory deprivation has, of course, continued, long after the British Government gave an 'assurance' that such methods would never be used again. From the British point of view one advantage of the Guineapigs experiment has been that the British are now regarded as experts at this sort of thing and are regularly invited to give demonstrations and hold seminars, notably at Fort Bragg, Carolina, and Fort Huachuca, Arizona in the States and at Bad Tolz in West Germany. For a time they were also instructing the fascist P.I.D.E. Portuguese secret police until, to their embarrassment, they discovered that since the Army coup they had for some time, unbeknownst to them, been giving lectures in counter-insurgency and torture to Latin American guerrillas whom Communist members of the Portuguese Army had infiltrated into the courses.

In England courses are held at Ashford in Kent, Catterick in Yorkshire, Bradbury Lines (the SAS camp in Hereford), and, most notably, Old Sarum in Wiltshire. Old Sarum is where the Officers' Psyops Course is held in the RAF base. An average course consists of 15 or 16 men, drawn from the Green Jackets, SAS, Royal Marines and Royal Artillery, with personnel from the Ministry of Defense and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. At the session held from February 14th-15th, 1972 according to Peter Watson, in his valuable book "War on the Mind",^[2] the star speaker was Lt. Col. B.R. Johnston, described as 'the foremost British authority on psyops. He spoke about the useful experience that they could all gather from N. Ireland. (Johnston, whose position has always been shrouded in secrecy eventually came to the public's attention during the 'ABC' case, when two journalists, Duncan Campbell, Crispin Aubrey and a former soldier called Berry were tried for publishing 'official secrets' about Britain's telecommunication spying activities in *Time Out* and the *Leveller*, two London magazines. Johnston gave evidence against them but was only described in court as 'Colonel B.' Gleefully the *Leveller* then published his name and issued badges to all attending the court proclaiming who he was. The prosecution collapsed with egg over its face and the accused escaped with fines.)

The courses, which include demonstrations of SD, are highly secret. On several occasions the relevant ministers in the British Government have lied and denied their existence. Even when the Army Minister Robert Brown was forced to admit, in 1976, that the courses did take place, he lied and said that they had only started in '1973-4'. In fact, as Watson has shown, they began at least in 1971 and possibly sooner. Whitehall sources vaguely stated that somewhat over 250 personnel underwent the courses per annum. One of the organizers of psyops, the famous/infamous Brigadier Kitson has bemoaned the 'fact' that the psyops team in Old Sarum numbers only 18 (an implausible figure), but, nonetheless, even if notoriously underestimated Government figures are to be believed, up to October 1976, 262 civilians and 1,858 Army officers had been through the course.

The SAS of course, in its training sessions, where they generally 'lose', i.e. kill, half a dozen or so volunteers a year in cross country endurance tests over the Brecon Beacons, include SD torture. Former SAS men have, in interviews with such variegated papers as the *Irish Times*, *Time Out*, *The Leveller* and *Red Weekly* claimed that many SAS men have been subjected to horrific 'ill-treatment' in order to 'toughen them up'. One former SAS man, now a 'respectable businessman in the city' recounted gleefully how one of the techniques taught was how to insert a Y shaped twig into the stomach of an interrogatee and twist it so that you could draw out the intestines. He claimed that in the Gulf states one SAS officer had succeeded in drawing out twenty feet of intestine from a 'guerrilla.' The story may not be true, and it is not suggested that such methods have, as yet, been used in N. Ireland, but it does give an interesting insight into the mentality of

soldiers – 'heroes of the Iranian Embassy siege' – who would boast about committing such atrocities.

And what of the use of SD in N. Ireland in the past nine years? It is implausible to explain, as British Army personnel have, that SD torture is demonstrated to its men solely for their own protection in case they are captured by 'the enemy'. In fact, although there does not appear to have been another full scale experiment into the use of 'the five techniques', various elements are still used by interrogators. In September 1976 the N.I. Civil Rights Association, a body violently opposed to the Provisional IRA, at a press conference announced that they were taking the cases of six men, three from Belfast and three from Cookstown to Strasbourg. All had been subjected to hooding, deprivation of sleep and prolonged wall standing before being released without being charged. In 1980 hooding is rare in the interrogation centres but wall standing, in the stoika position is very common.

In 1974, just after 'The Guineapigs' was published, Bernard Dineen, Business Editor of 'The Yorkshire Post', was just one of the journalists who enthusiastically urged that SD should be 'imported' to England. "Take off the kidgloves and use this weapon against the terrorists", he trumpeted. He would presumably have been glad to learn that some members of the Metropolitan police agreed with him when it was alleged by a London Irishman Eddie O'Neill, in February 1975, during his trial at the Old Bailey where he was accused of being part of a bombing conspiracy, that during a five day period:

"I was made to stand for hours with my fingertips to the wall and my feet as far back as possible. There was a whistling sound like wind escaping and lights were flashed on and off. After a while I collapsed. I was picked up and put in the same position. If I refused, the usual procedure was to kick me in the privates. After two or three hours I was interrogated and urged to confess. When I insisted on my innocence I was given the cold room treatment. I was put in a refrigeration room. It was a small cubicle and I was in there for two hours, then taken out and put between two convector heaters. With that treatment you lose all control of your muscles. I couldn't use my hands or legs. They did that to me four times in all. Then I was put into another cubicle and made to count the pinholes in the wall. If I did not get the answer right they came back and gave me a hiding, pulling my hair and slapping my face."

He claimed that detectives put fingers on pressure points on his body – behind the ears, the shoulder blades and the solar plexus and continuously made him take cold showers. The whole treatment lasted between 60 and 70 hours, over a five day period and he was made to sleep in an empty detention room, naked, which had water all over the floor.

The judge and jury were obviously unimpressed. Eddie O'Neill got 20 years on the strength of his alleged 'confession'. Clearly it was unbelievable that British policemen would do such things.

* * *

There remains one other purpose to which information derived from the SD Guineapigs has been put, and that is to break recalcitrant/ troublesome revolutionary prisoners in jails. In this short section 1 shall concentrate on the use of Control Units in English jails and then on the 'German experiment'.

Section 4. — *Control Units.*

After two years preparation the control units at Wakefield jail received their first inmates in August 1974. One of these was John Masterson. In spite of later denials by Home Office spokesmen, the existence, nature and purpose of the units was kept secret from all but a handful of people. It was not until October that the public learned about them, through a report by the *Sunday Times* Insight team. The adverse publicity resulted

in the control units in Wakefield and Wormwood Scrubs prisons being 'closed' in February 1975.

The control unit experiment consisted of exposing a selected group of prisoners, whom the authorities regarded as 'troublemakers' to an oppressive, semi-sensory deprivation regime in a 'control unit'. The psychology behind the prison authorities' rationale was based on the SD experiments in Ulster. The 'Treatment' was expected to last a minimum of six months, divided into two periods of ninety days. The first ninety days consisted of solitary confinement with the very minimum of communication, followed by a further ninety days of slightly increased contact with others and primitive occupational activity. Any deviation from the rules, as defined by the warders/screws would result in the prisoner going back to Day One, and starting the whole sequence from scratch.

Solitary confinement is a common prison punishment, but the Control Unit differed from the ordinary solitary in that there was a high ratio of prison officers to prisoners, and the prisoner was watched by at least two officers when he did anything such as going to the toilet or having his food brought to him. There were frequent searches of the cell and intimate body searches of the prisoner, including anal examinations, such as the men in the H Blocks in Long Kesh have to endure daily to this very day. These searches are obviously designed to degrade, since the absence of contact with other prisoners or visitors, and solitary confinement in the Unit precluded the possibility of anything being hidden either in the cell or on the prisoner.

Conversation between the prison officers and the prisoner was not permitted, the screws using gestures instead of words, thus combining SD with degradation. The prisoner was made to feel that he was sub-human.' The result was not exactly what the experimental psychologists had probably envisaged. John Masterson, by his own admission, a 'criminal' with a lot of prison experience, had been brutalised before, but never to this extent. "I was treated like a subhuman animal and, as a result, started to feel like an animal. I could see that they (the warders) could do anything they liked to me and get away with it. I believed that they could kill me and get away with it. After all, dozens of people die in British jails every year and it is put down to 'suicide' or 'natural causes'. (Cf. Noel Jenkinson. Framed for the Aldershot bombing and, although a perfectly fit man, indeed a fitness fanatic, found dead of 'a heart attack' in his cell, just before his case was due to come up at Strasbourg. See also, Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, Carl Raspe et al who managed, mysteriously, 'to commit suicide' in maximum security German jails.)

In an interview Masterson, subsequently released in a very troubled mental state, which has necessitated hospitalisation, said. "we weren't allowed to talk ... they wouldn't even talk amongst themselves. You never seen (sic) the other prisoners because you're only opened up one cell at a time ... the screws just stand about staring at you with their feet astride. I knew that the bastards were quite prepared to kill me if they were ordered to do so." The interviewer, on the BBC programme 'Tonight', reacted incredulously to such a suggestion. Masterson must obviously be a paranoid.

"A paranoid is someone who has some vague idea of what is really going on." — (William Burroughs.)

On 20th May, 1976, BBC2 'Man Alive' programme did a report on 'segregation' (i.e. SD) in British jails. In it, a Dr. Pickering, exdirector of the Prison Medical Service (who was in charge when Masterson was going through his ordeal), admitted that 'control units had been a mistake'. A year previously he had been reassuring concerned colleagues in the medical profession that there were no causes for concern.

In conjunction with this statement it might be instructive to consider the following two quotations from that great hearted liberal (with a small 'l') Roy Jenkins, the then Home Secretary and the man who refused to repatriate the Price sisters who had been on hunger strike and forcibly fed for over 250 days.

"I am satisfied that the safeguards and procedures are such that the trained staff of Wakefield are able to maintain a careful and caring watch on the progress and condition of prisoners in the control unit."
House of Commons. 14th November 1974.)

"I am satisfied that allegations, which have received considerable publicity, of sensory deprivation, cruelty and brutality in the unit, are completely unfounded and that the Governor and staff have conducted themselves in a commendably professional manner."

(House of Commons. 24th October 1975.)

The only definite conclusion that one can draw from these statements is that Roy Jenkins ('Woy' to his very few friends) is a satisfied man. With his vast salary and paid sinecure as President of the EEC this is not too hard to understand. What is more difficult to comprehend is his apparent surprise when the 'popular' press informed him that he was listed as a prime target by the Provisional IRA.

The control Units were supposed to be scrapped, following the *Sunday Times* articles in October 1975. In fact they have not been. Prisoners, and in particular IRA prisoners, the most vulnerable and exposed group of prisoners in the English penal system, have been since subjected to various forms of SD in Control Units in Wakefield, Wormwood Scrubbs and Gartree jails. (Gartree recently spent \$948,000 on a new 'segregation unit'). We also have the horror of the 'Inverness cages' in Scotland. The following is a condensed report taken from RAP (Radical Alternatives to Prison), dated June 1976.

"There are six cells in the punishment wing of Inverness prison. Five of them have cage fronts inside. The prisoner enters the ordinary cell, which has concrete walls and a steel lined door, and is then put inside a cage within this cell. Food is pushed through a gap at the bottom of the cage. In order to eat, the prisoner must sit on the floor, resting the meal on his knees or on the concrete. The only furniture is an uncovered chamber pot. There is a small window with opaque glass and a heavy grilled mesh outside. It is hard to tell day from night.

The sixth cell is called the 'silent cell'. (see 'Toter Trakt', in the section on German prisons). It is a concrete cell within a concrete cell. The prisoner is within two sets of walls. Entry is through two heavy doors. Once inside the prisoner hears nothing, except the ringing in his ears. He lies there with no toilet facilities. The ratio of warders to prisoners is five to one. Occasionally one hour's exercise, alone, is permitted. The prisoner is submitted to a humiliating body search three times a day. Co-operative prisoners receive one book (censored) a week. One toothbrush is left in a metal sink. All prisoners have to use it. A toothbrush isn't allowed in the cage because 'it could be used as a weapon'. This applies to every artifact, including the pen, which is loaned once a week. The official period of confinement in the cages is not less than two months and not more than six. Prisoners in the recent past have been confined in such conditions for up to 22 months. (In fairness to the Scottish prison authorities, who, I'm sure, deep in their hearts are very real, wonderful human beings, I recounted the Inverness conditions to a young man recently released from the notorious H Blocks in Long Kesh, N. Ireland. His only comment was – "Luxury".

There is no room in this brief chapter to go into the American experiments in "Behaviour Modification", as it is euphemistically called. Any interested readers are referred to Jessica Mitford's fascinating and horrifying book "The American Prison Business" which deals with behaviour 'modification' as practised on prisoners in such horrendous prisons as Marion, Vacaville and Butner. Drugs, such as anectine which causes the 'guineapig' to feel that he she is dying are relied on heavily in these institutions and the psychological thinking behind the experiments owes much to B.F. Skinner.

THE GERMAN EXPERIMENT.

The West German authorities, partners with Britain in NATO and great admirers of the British SAS, were not slow to appreciate how the SD experiment in N. Ireland could be put to use in their own jails. Most of the clinical research seems to have been done at the University of Hamburg-Eppendorf, where researchers, led by a J. Gross evaluated the 'camera silens', the silent cell. As a result, many West German prisons are now equipped with 'dead cells', or 'Toter Trakt', as the Germans call them. These include the jails at Hanover, Cologne-Ossendorf, Hamburg-Fuhlsbuettel, Berlin-Tegel, Berlin Lehrter Strasse, Bruchsal, Essen, Straubing, Werl, Butzbach Ziegenhain/Schwalmstadt, Bremen-Oslebshausen, Mannheim and the notorious Frankfurt-Preungesheim. Evidence given at the Third Conference of the European Group for the Study of Deviance and

Social Control in Amsterdam in 1975 indicated that in addition to the 80 or so alleged members of the RAF/Baader-Meinhof/2nd June groups some 100 'ordinary criminals', as the authorities deem them, have spent time in the 250 or so isolation cells which exist in German prisons. (These figures date from late 1975). Recent indications are that more rather than fewer cells are in regular use.

Since 1972 prisoners such as Ulrike Meinhof, Andreas Baader, Gudrun Ensslin, Jan Carl Raspe, all subsequently murdered in their cells,^[3] were regularly subjected to 'the special treatment' in an effort to break their will. The 'Special Treatment' included:

- Systematic segregation from other prisoners, which means exclusion from all communal activities and a ban on all conversation with other prisoners or warders, any attempt to break this rule being punished by confinement to strip cells.
- Special screens being fitted outside their cell windows which distort perception of the outside world. (This has also been done in the H Blocks in Long Kesh.)
- Only one hour's exercise a day and that alone, and handcuffed.
- A ban on all visits and mail except from approved relatives.
- All visits supervised and tape recorded by the political police, who have than tried to use such conversations as evidence in court proceedings.
- Total censorship of books and papers.

These restrictions are inhuman enough, but the worst treatment, which involves additional SD techniques is reserved for those prisoners who are put in the 'Toter Trakt'. This is a completely empty wing of a prison where the prisoner is cut off from any normal human sound. In Hanover and Cologne-Ossendorf these wings were originally the prison hospital, and the women's psychiatric wards respectively, which have been converted into isolation units. In these cells, painted a brilliant white, the light is kept on 24 hours a day. The walls and door are soundproofed and a screen on the window insures that the prisoner can see nothing and is kept in a sonic vacuum where the only sound is the beating of one's heart. Evidence from Professors Mueller, Schroeder, Rasch, and Preuss indicate that even a fairly brief sojourn in conditions like these lead to the same kind of symptoms that Dr. Daly found in the N. Ireland Guineapigs. Just one more example of the 'successful' exportation of British techniques designed to make the work of Totalitarian regimes just that bit easier.

John McGuffin. Belfast. 1980.

Footnotes Afterword:

1. In private discussions during the Labour Party Conference in 1974 Merlyn Rees and Stan Orme told MPs that they would never sign a second internment order on the two men. Being honourable men, they kept their word. Their deputies signed the orders.
2. *War on the Mind*. Pelican Books. 1980.
3. Those who feel that this is a rash accusation to make against the German authorities would do well to read *La Mort d'Ulrike Meinhof* (Maspero, Paris 1979) and the reports of the International Commission into the deaths of Meinhof, Baader *et. al.*, of which the author was a member.

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‘The Guineapigs’ by John McGuffin (1974, 1981)

Appendix I

The following is part of a memorandum submitted to the Parker Committee in December 1971. It was written by an American, Gil Boehringer, a former lecturer in the Sociology of Law and Deviant Behaviour at Queen's University, Belfast. Since we live under a system of 'repressive tolerance' (to use Marcuse's term), it is highly unlikely that the State will accept any of these modest and liberal proposals, nor are Gil Boehringer or I naïve enough to expect that it will. Nevertheless the suggestions put forward here may serve to show what might be possible in a truly democratic or even a liberal society. The memorandum is Gil Boehringer's work. I have only added two footnotes.

Memorandum of Modest Proposals for Preventing the Spread of Torture and Ill-treatment in Northern Ireland

Gil Boehringer

Internment and all related matters, particularly interrogation, must be seen as a part of a dynamic process of interaction between the peoples of Northern Ireland, and in particular the minority community which, it is widely conceded, has been denied social justice for five decades by successive Unionist governments.

The depth of feeling amongst the working-class section of the Catholic community was not, in my view, fully appreciated either at Stormont or Westminster and therefore inadequate measures were taken to avoid the tragic mistakes that have been made.

If internment is to continue, and if it is to be used in the future here in Northern Ireland or elsewhere, then stringent measures must be established in order to prevent repetitions of the 'ill-treatment' recorded in the Compton Report.

A. AN ANALYSIS OF THE SITUATION IN WHICH THE SECURITY FORCES ARE OPERATING AND THEIR PROBABLE RESPONSE

1. The security forces have an important and dangerous job to do, and it is clear from statements by their leaders and those responsible for security that there is great pressure upon them to 'get results'.

2. We can therefore expect them to be subjected to strong personal, social and more general *pressures to use methods which will obtain information, whether or not the methods conform to the rules governing interrogation*. This is particularly so where the interrogation team is local and sectarian, as presumably it has been in the main – and of course interrogatees were from a different section of the community; it is also likely to be so when the situation is defined by the interrogators as 'war' and no-holds-barred can be an acceptable attitude.

3. The security forces involved in internment, and especially interrogation, tend to be isolated, semi-

autonomous, with a high degree of group support and a strong sense of their group purpose. Add to this the fact that they are dealing with people they firmly believe are subversive (in most cases, though not always subversive in the sense of constituting a threat to life) and it is not surprising that they should adopt what has been referred to in another context as a 'crime control' approach rather than one of 'due process' or natural justice.

4. In such circumstances the security forces are likely to tend to take on an attitude of knowing better than 'outsiders' how to deal with these people; they are *likely to begin to act according to their own norms*, which are at variance with the rules established to control them. They can function in this way particularly well when there is a mystique of their being well disciplined, trust-worthy and humane.

5. *The historical evidence*: with regard to police activity generally, and interrogation techniques specifically, the British record is not so bad as that of many other nations; *however*, it is clear that the *record*, particularly in the last twenty years, *is not so bright*. One need only refer to the growing list of police scandals – Sheffield, Leeds, Brighton, Metropolitan London – and the findings concerning security forces – Kenya, Aden, Northern Ireland – to realize that *maltreatment has taken place not infrequently*. *Therefore there can be no presumption in favour of the security forces when the question of maltreatment arises*.

6. We are here talking only of 'recorded deviance', and criminology has taught us that the amount of deviance which is recorded is invariably a much smaller amount than that which actually occurs. This concept of unrecorded deviance, or the 'dark figure', is an important one when considering whether to implement wide-ranging reforms with regard to the control of behaviour which occurs at times and places of the security forces' choice and usually in isolation from society – behaviour with 'low visibility'.

7. It must be accepted then that even if stringent new rules or more strict interpretations are laid down, deviance can be expected. It would be surprising if the interrogators and their aides did not take the view that because the rules are made up by 'outsiders', by persons who 'do not fully understand the situation', by 'bleeding hearts' and 'interfering politicians', they are justified in deviating from those rules (this is the essence of the 'crime control' model of behaviour).

8. The problem then is to try to *devise controls*, to *develop sanctions* and to establish an *on-going review and investigation* so that the mystique does not prevent society from realizing that safeguards are needed against deviance. Such deviance from the rules is to be expected as a result of the context within which the security forces are operating, but it is not acceptable, and realistic steps must be taken to curb it.

9. Thus we are faced essentially with a *sociological problem of deviant behaviour* and how to control it, *not with a problem of establishing rules and court-oriented remedies*. Plain speaking is required, a willingness to look impartially at the situation in the light of both historical experience and our knowledge of social interaction.

B. THE NEED FOR SPECIFIC AND WELL-PUBLICIZED RULES

1. In considering the rule aspect of interrogation it 'is important to have in mind the circumstances in Northern Ireland in which the Northern Ireland government decided to exercise their powers'. For justice – even in an 'emergency situation' – must not only be done but it must be believed to be done even if it cannot be seen to be done. Therefore there must not only be rules governing the interrogation process which are specific and humane; the rules must be capable of enforcement through agencies of control, with both positive and negative sanctions provided for.

2. The reasons for requiring the security forces to conform strictly to specific rules are several, and exist without regard to the category of person being interrogated (although more stringent rules might be thought

proper in the case of persons not actively engaged in subversive activities, the need for conformity is no greater); without regard to the kind of treatment the subject may have expected or could be considered to have invited by his actions; without regard to his willingness or not to complain; and without regard to the mental element of the interrogators (the idea put forward by the Compton Report that this is a crucial factor in determining the degree of maltreatment ought to be rejected, as it plainly has by many commentators).

3. The *test applied* ought to be an objective one: what was done to the subject? Liability should be strict, with no distinction made between intentional maltreatment and that which occurs through negligence.

4. The reasons for establishing such a strict test are:
(a) to afford protection to the interrogatee who is in a very vulnerable position;
(b) to put the burden of justification more clearly on the security forces and thereby attempt to change their pattern of behaviour as reported in Compton;
(c) to help prevent a situation arising where individual members of the security forces become corrupted by activities for which they believe they will not be held accountable;
(d) to help prevent a situation arising where society becomes corrupted by a too-complacent unconcern about acts done on its behalf.

5. The *status* of detainees and internees should be that of 'protected persons' as that term is used in the 1949 Geneva Convention on the treatment of civilians, with the regulations amended to cover 'psychological coercion' as well as 'physical or moral coercion'. The authorities should not be permitted to invoke Art. 5 of that convention – withdrawing the status of 'protected person' – until they can prove to a judicial tribunal that they have reasonable grounds to believe that the subject is actively engaged in behaviour which is a direct threat to human life. The tribunal might meet *in camera*, but the subject should be entitled at least to a public defender, and the tribunal should be empowered to inquire independently as to the reasonable grounds.

6. General observations on the rules concerning interrogation:
(a) they must be clear and specific, indicating the exact type of treatment which can be meted out;
(b) they must be arrived at in public discussion in Parliament and given wide publicity;
(c) they must be displayed in all interrogation centres, detention centres and holding stations;
(d) they must include the physical location of interrogation centres and their physical construction and furnishings;
(e) any changes with regard to treatment techniques and locations must be brought about in the same manner as the original rules were adopted.

C. THE CASE AGAINST RELYING ON AN INVESTIGATOR

1. Although the concept of an independent investigative bureaucrat as a mechanism for uncovering wrongs within a system has great appeal and can claim some validity on historical evidence, the situation of internment and accompanying interrogation is sufficiently unique to call for a re-assessment.

2. The investigating bureaucrat will be under considerable pressure to uphold the security forces in general, while finding some evidence of maltreatment, i.e. to reach a compromise. This is not to say that he is corrupt; in effect, it is to say that the situation is structured so that he can be expected to do little else:

(a) he is a member of an 'acceptable elite' stratum of society, otherwise he would not be chosen for the inquiry. As such there is no need to corrupt him or to even indicate to him how he should report; because he has been socialized by his life's environment, he will *understand* how he is to report. He in fact starts with a presumption in favour of the security forces;
(b) because he will have to live with his reference group and peers generally, the investigator will find it virtually impossible to report anything that would cast serious discredit on institutions that they admire,

feel attached to and, to some extent, responsible for.^[1] The minimal discredit which he does cast at the security forces will, of course, not make any great difference, in fact it will support his own self-image as incorruptible, and their image of him, plus giving support to their general opinion that the system is good except for a few bad apples;

(c) there may be other considerations of a less psychological nature: the investigator may wish to buttress or establish his own reputation, or position, and could be subjected to direct or indirect pressures from the system to reach the right sort of conclusions;

(d) the investigator may have his own preconceived notions concerning both the activities of security forces and interrogatees, and towards the situation which has brought interrogation into being, and will certainly be influenced by those beliefs;

(e) there are always pressures operating of a kind which I will refer to as 'psycho-bureaucratic'. That is to say that the investigator must rely on the system to function, and if he should incur the displeasure of persons within the system he is investigating, he will find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to do his job properly. Thus there is the 'psychological corruption' of the investigator, normally occurring unconsciously, wherein the investigator's task is made easy and pleasant, so long as he refrains from 'stirring up trouble'. It is this dimension of the social interaction between the bureaucrat and the system which is the basis for the former's being 'co-opted'. In the process, investigation tends to become justification with, of course, minor knuckle-rapping;

(f) it is also well known to students of organization theory that the 'amateur investigator' will be no match for the professionals he is investigating, and with regard to interrogation this must be even more certainly the case.

3. The need then is for a really independent investigatory board – independent in that members have no political or other significant connection with the British government. A UN-designated International Control Commission would be a reasonable suggestion. (At worst a board consisting of members some of whom were independent, i.e. nominated by the UN or some other non-British agency.)

4. In order to be effective, the board must have free access upon demand not only to the interrogation centre, but to all other places connected with security operations, e.g. places of arrest, within vehicles for transportation between arrest and holding, etc. The American experience with regard to police activity has shown that police brutality occurs in many out-of-the-way places.

5. It is also necessary that such a commission have notice of operations so that they can observe; the point is that, as the Americans have found out with regard to rules concerning protection for criminal defendants, there are many ways of avoiding the rules and avoiding the searching eye of the defendant's would-be protectors. Failure to notify should bring penalties.

6. A point that is very important and will be discussed again below, but should be mentioned here, is the need for *observation of training methods*. Interrogation is a skill, and training with the techniques is mandatory; by observing techniques the controllers will at least make it more difficult for illegal techniques to be perfected so as to avoid inspection.

D. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FAILURE OF MANY INTERNEES TO COMPLAIN

1. Persons who have been subject to interrogation cannot be expected, for the most part, to complain or to be able to substantiate their complaints if they do so. Thus any lack of complaint or failure to substantiate complaints cannot be taken as justifying the conclusion that no maltreatment has occurred. It is important to understand why there may be few complaints, particularly in the Northern Ireland context, both for an appreciation of past conduct of security forces and future conflict.

2. As with crime generally, victims may not complain for a wide variety of reasons:

(a) *Retaliation if they do complain*: here it is retaliation from two sources mainly – the IRA (whose policy it is not to co-operate) and the security forces. Whatever we may think of the IRA and its policy of non-cooperation is here irrelevant; we are concerned to prevent maltreatment of human beings, with the resultant bad effects on the victims, the attacker, and society at large: we must understand that members of the IRA as well as persons under their influence may not wish to complain, and that they remain silent ought not to allow society to ignore the very real possibility of maltreatment. There is of course the possibility of retaliation by security forces: criminologists with experience of prison conditions generally can attest to the very real threat posed to a person complaining against his gaolers. (For this reason one must take a sceptical position on the value of a Board of Visitors as a control mechanism, although every little bit may help.)

(b) Many people do not report crimes because they don't believe it will do any good (e.g., nobody will take any real notice; no proof; no compensation; nor any sanction), and this reason may also exist where a man has been subjected to 'techniques of persuasion' that are so sophisticated as to be difficult to detect.

(c) The same is true where the man believes the system is loaded against him; this is the basis for scepticism about inquiries such as that resulting in the Compton Report; it must be especially true when the victims are working-class Catholics who have a firm belief that they have been maltreated their entire life by a system of one-party sectarian rule.

(d) The man who has been maltreated and has given in is much like the blackmailer's victim – he probably has more to lose by complaining; thus the Army has taken the opportunity to label the escapers Meehan and Doherty as 'squealers' in order to denigrate them and reduce their effectiveness. There is no reason to believe that similar methods are not or would not be used in other cases.

(e) Sometimes victims of crime do not know they have suffered a loss, and the same might be true of a man who has been subjected to a variety of modern sophisticated 'treatments'; it is perfectly possible to put people into such states that they are incapable of knowing or describing maltreatment.

(f) It is possible that some victims would not complain because it would not be consistent with their own masculine image of being able to take what is given out without complaining.

(g) A corollary would be that victims might have a commitment to 'self-help', and therefore would prefer not to complain, thus allowing for complete revenge at a later time.

(h) There might be some unwillingness to complain because of fright and heartache to relatives and friends outside.

(i) There might be a desire not to complain because the individual may wish to keep comrades outside from worrying about his having 'spilled the beans' under torture, whether or not he did so.

E. SOME GENERAL COMMENTS ON CONTROLS AND SANCTIONS

1. The problem of sanctions is of utmost significance. Rules and control mechanisms without sanctions are simply hortatory, and will be seen to be such.

2. The difficulty of using sanctions to enforce rules and to allow controls to work effectively arises from aspects of the system, and it is the system which must be re-structured (although obviously any pathological individuals must be weeded out of the sections of the security forces which are involved).

3. The following four aspects of the internment/interrogation process should be kept in mind:

(a) *By the nature of the operation*, activities to be controlled are of 'low visibility' – there is little contemporaneous observation by anyone except those involved;

(b) *persons who are maltreated* have relatively little to gain by making complaints;

(c) *great pressure bears* upon the security forces to get information in ways that are deviant from the rules laid down;

(d) *security forces normally tend to be a select group with considerable inner cohesion*, and therefore have developed considerable immunity from external pressures.

4. It is aspect (d) which is perhaps crucial to a full understanding of the problem which faces us in trying to develop control institutions and effective sanctions. My analysis is based on sociological theory concerning group dynamics and certain sociological concepts; *it is also based on empirical research* into analogous social groups, i.e. police officers and prison officers. It is true that the analogy is not complete, nevertheless it is more likely than not that patterns of behaviour will prevail amongst the security forces which are substantially similar, in important respects, to that of the police/prison officers studied in this country and abroad. If the analysis is in general terms correct, as I believe it to be, then it will lead us to a more realistic appraisal of possible control agencies and techniques, and more effective sanctions.

5. In order to analyse the pressures towards deviance, we must consider interrogation as a stage in the *context* of the ongoing process of maintaining security. Thus we must take note of the interrelationship between, e.g., recruitment and training of those engaged in internment/interrogation and the actual performance of their role, rather than focusing only upon the internment/interrogation occasion as a discrete social phenomenon.

6. *My hypothesis* is that because of certain structural features, rather than individual aberrance, deviation from the rules has and will occur.

7. This hypothesis is constructed from the characteristics which I believe typify security forces; this judgement is based on my knowledge of and research into police and military organization and practice. The significant characteristics which appear to exist in the Northern Ireland situation are:

(a) Men are recruited and trained for the general task of maintaining State security against subversive elements (and more specifically are trained in modern means of persuasion, both physical and psychological);

(b) they have, or develop as a member of this elite group, a messianic vision of their own importance in acting as a bulwark of society under threat (and, of course, in Northern Ireland they are bombarded by the mass media about being in a war and can see this with their own eyes; also they see civilians and their colleagues being killed and maimed almost daily);

(c) they know there is a major propaganda effort on behalf of the security forces to cover their activities;

(d) they know that by its bureaucratic nature the armed forces/police will, in most cases, support their activities and reject claims of malfeasance in order to prevent loss of legitimacy in the community;

(e) they know there is a tradition of maltreatment of internees by British forces (e.g. Kenya, Cyprus, Aden) without sanction and apparently with at least retroactive support (e.g. the case of the three interrogators in Aden who were protected by the command structure from the Bowen Inquiry);

(f) they know they can trust their colleagues to help them and to hinder any investigation (e.g. the Devenney affair);^[2]

(g) they know civil and criminal actions against them are unlikely, and in any case are almost inevitably doomed to fail;

(h) they don't really accept the need to follow the dictates of politicians and 'interfering do-gooders' (e.g. academics, NCCL), or 'front organizations' (e.g. NICRA, Association for Legal Justice), and have a 'more realistic' understanding of the situation;

(i) they seek a short-term *military solution* and do not have a deeper understanding of the *political problem* that exists, and which makes internment/interrogation a very doubtful technique in the long run;

(j) they have been led to believe that this must be the right method because it worked in the past.

8. *The picture which emerges* then is of a self-protecting organization under severe pressures to produce quick results through an operation which is already 'abnormal', where 'success' is measured entirely by results, not how well the game was played, and where there is little point in not breaking the rules because, although there is no positive reward, there is no negative sanction for infringing the rules. In fact, one assumes that failure to get information is the biggest impediment to a successful career in that line of work (not to mention the adverse psychological effects on the interrogator who has not succeeded) and that interrogators would be inclined to deviate from the rules in order to succeed. It is also the case that the officers in charge will be judged in the same way on the basis of success or failure in getting information. Further pressures towards deviance emanate from the situation in which certain short-term benefits can be clearly observed, while at the same time the worsening of the situation calls for more information, more successes, more quickly.

F. CONTROLLING DEVIANT BEHAVIOUR OF INTERROGATORS

The following are suggested as methods which may mitigate the effect of pressures towards deviance; none of these, nor probably any other, will singly prevent deviance, but with an array and variety of measures there is a good chance of eliminating a great deal of maltreatment which is otherwise inevitable.

1. Recruitment and training:

(a) Pathological individuals must be carefully screened out in the initial post-recruitment phase, and periodically thereafter psychological checks must be made in order to weed out persons who have become pathological concerning 'the enemy'.

(b) Training must be closely supervised by outside, independent observers and publicity must be given to the techniques to be used. This has several advantages: it may deter some persons from getting into activities which would be the cause of their being submitted to such techniques; training in legal methods only would tend to create a respect for the 'due process/natural justice' view rather than the 'crime control' view; without training in illegal methods it would be that much harder to use them without being detected.

(c) Training must include a realistic political element, in which the disadvantages of internment, interrogation and particular deviant methods would be given primary importance.

(d) Who should be the observers? (i) some independent group such as the NCCL, or an international body selected for example by the UN; or (ii) it could be one of the functions of the Internment Inspectorate Internment Control Board (discussed in further detail below).

2. Organization of the internment/interrogation team. In order to break up the social cohesion of the interrogation team and thereby reduce the internal pressures towards deviance and increase of visibility of deviance, two principles ought to be followed:

(a) Interrogation duties ought to be spread as widely as possible amongst the general unit to which they belong (i.e. police or Army);

(b) interrogators should not be organized into any single agency (special unit); a corollary of this would be that they should be *primarily* engaged in some other field and only called upon for interrogation when necessary;

(c) certain members of the interrogating force should be trained primarily as part of a special corps, the *Internment Inspectorate*, to which they would have responsibility for reporting deviant activity by interrogators. (It would be especially valuable if this aspect of their training was kept secret in order to increase their usefulness as inspectors.)

3. The Internment Authority:

(a) Responsibility for the technical side of the operation must be placed in the hands of persons who have no long-term unit loyalty to the interrogators, so that they would not feel it advantageous to the unit nor

to themselves to cover up deviant practices. Again, this might be a special agency, perhaps a civil service body (Westminster) seconded for the purpose. The principle is that the members of this body would *lose* by covering up any maltreatment and this could be arranged by a variety of means – blocked promotion, denial of pay increments, etc.

(b) The Internment Inspectorate would be the investigatory arm of the Internment Authority, and could be formed by seconded police inspectors from outside Northern Ireland (or other affected area). Positive sanctions for detection of deviance might be sufficient to prevent them from being co-opted.

4. *External observers:* Although not too much faith ought to be put in external observation because of the possibility of deception, it is a method of control that should be used if only in order to make it harder to deviate from the rules.

(a) Medical inspection. Impartial medical inspection must be guaranteed. Civilian doctors, picked at random (perhaps from a volunteer rota) and not part of government agencies, should be on hand to make inspections immediately after arrest and before and after transmission to any new stage of detention, interrogation or internment. Records of such inspections should be transmitted immediately to an independent Medical Review Board and copies to the arrested person's family and/or solicitor. Any failure to keep appropriate records or to make proper administrative arrangements should not be dismissed (per Compton) but should be subject to sanctions.

(b) Legal advice. Impartial legal advisers must be present at holding centres *after arrest and prior to any further detention and interrogation*. They could be provided for in a manner similar to that used for medical inspection. Failure to so arrange would again be sanctionable.

Such advisers should be allowed to speak privately with arrestees and be required to inform them of their rights, e.g. not to be brutally treated. The possibility of seeking redress for maltreatment, and any other information deemed appropriate to protect the interogatees.

The adviser should be authorized to record complaints concerning arrest procedures.

The adviser shall make a note of and make arrangements to deal with any personal problems indicated by the arrested person, in particular matters concerning the health and welfare of his immediate family.

A legal adviser of his own choice or else an impartial legal adviser shall have access to the interogatee as soon as the *interrogation proper* has been terminated.

Arrangements should be made for the subject to verify to his legal adviser the names or other identification of individuals who took part in the interrogation, e.g. he could be shown pictures of the interrogation staff and could indicate the ones who had interogated him or who took part in the process as guard, etc.

(c) *Prison visitors.* Speaking from my experience as a penologist and as a social scientist, I would not recommend a standing body such as Prison Visitors. Such institutions rapidly lose their effectiveness and become little more than a rubber-stamp of approval for the authority whom they are meant, in part at least, to control.

The need is for a less formally organized institution – in my view this could be done in much the same manner as people are selected for jury service: at random from the general population, although property and other qualifications based on class position ought to be eliminated.

A volunteer roster could be established and a balance of interests ensured through a minimal amount of screening.

5. *Records:* Persons interogated shall have access to all records concerning the interrogation process (time schedules, medical reports, and notes of interrogation indicating 'techniques of persuasion', questions and answers, if any). These records to be kept daily, and copies of daily records to be *transmitted daily* to the International Control Commission for inspection; copies to go to the Internment Inspectorate Authority and

Control Boards.

6. *Complaints:* An Internment Control Board should be set up in order to receive complaints concerning illegality of procedures during the entire interrogation process (including failure to follow any of the above procedures), complaints to the Board to be allowed from any person or organization – from interrogatees, from any persons or agencies acting on their behalf or as 'amicus', or from any observers in the above categories.

With regard to all complaints, there shall be a *presumption of validity* which the security forces will have to meet. This presumption is, in a sense, contrary to the usual concept of 'presumed innocent until proved guilty'. Nevertheless, the differences are sufficient to justify the deviation. The essential basis for presumption is normally to protect the citizen against an oppressive government by giving him a slight advantage in a context where most of the advantage – in terms of resources – lies with the State. It is a safeguard against bureaucratic authoritarianism. In the case of an individual in the interrogation situation, all the resources are again on the side of the State and once again the system should bear the burden of proving the case after a complaint has been lodged.

The main objections to this are:

- (a) It is hard for the security forces to prove they did not maltreat an internee;
- (b) a lot of false accusations will be made for propaganda and other purposes.

The answer to these two arguments is as follows:

(a) It is even harder for the internee to prove his allegation (and in many cases as indicated above he will take no part in the 'trial'); also, there should be no presumption of innocence for the State, which in effect would mean that the individual is lying, when history indicates that in every situation of total power such interrogation abuses are not infrequent.

(b) The degree of propaganda advantage will be no greater than it is today – in my opinion, based on research in Northern Ireland, the Compton Report is seen by a large part of the community (not just Catholic) as being a lame propaganda exercise itself. Far better if the security forces are put to the test in public, and seen to pass it.

(c) The result of such a presumption would tend to make rule-observance self-enforcing – a result which in our opinion is unlikely to be achieved in any other way. Thus the security forces would make certain that appropriate charts were kept and attested to and that observers would be on station at all times necessary to prevent false accusations.

7. *Internment Control Board.* This board should have two main functions:

(a) To review the specific conduct of the process of internment, including interrogation techniques, and to hear complaints from interrogatees;

(b) during the period of internment, to make a continuous review of the rules and regulations by which internment and interrogation are governed, for example, those concerning observers, medical and legal advisers, etc.

The Board would be civilian, and composed of persons selected at random from a list compiled from nominations made by the political parties (Westminster).

The Board would be charged with a duty to receive complaints from any relevant source and would, through its own investigatory staff, determine so far as possible the facts of the incidents complained of; it would also be authorized to investigate any other aspects of the internment process even though no complaint has been filed.

The findings by the Board should be made available to the subject, his lawyer, and as admissible evidence in a civil or criminal action should the subject seek a legal remedy (or if the government itself instituted an action against an interrogator, e.g. for brutally – thus criminally – assaulting an internee). The finding

should also be forwarded to the Internment Authority and to the Internment Inspectorate, to be available as the basis for disciplinary action.

With regard to its second function, the Board would be charged with a duty to make recommendations to the Authority as to how the internment procedure might be altered, with particular regard to practices (and the individuals so engaged) which are considered deviant, or getting very close to it.

The Internment Control Board would replace the Compton Inquiry (first or second model), and would fulfil in a continuing manner much the same function the Parker Committee has been given; however the ICB would also be a *vital line in establishing plausible sanctions* against both individuals and the agency of security in charge of interrogation.

8. *Civil and criminal actions:* It must be clear to any impartial commentator that the possibility of interrogators and allied personnel being successfully sued or prosecuted under the law as it stands at present is effectively nought. Thus some reform such as I have suggested above with regard to the Control Board's findings might be called for.

Some method of permitting injunctions on behalf of internees who may be thought to be undergoing maltreatment (similar to the recent one concerning Attica State Prison, New York) might be considered; the likelihood of this procedure operating in a timely fashion to bar maltreatment is not great; nevertheless it might be a method of preventing gross and continuing abuse after initial deviance from the rules had been detected (the injunction should be obtainable by any individual or agency).

G. HOW THEN CAN WE DEVELOP A SYSTEM OF EFFECTIVE SANCTIONS?

1. The process of imposing sanctions must be seen as a part of the larger process – the struggle to achieve a political goal within the community – a part of which is the use of the extreme measures of internment and interrogation. (The following analysis is based in part on the article by Professor Coral Bell, 'Ireland – The Dynamics of Insurgency', *New Society*, 25 November 1971.)

2. The first aspect of the 'game' is that from one side of the community, the security forces will be seen as acting partially, and – by many on both sides – brutally when carrying out the internment/interrogation policy. To some considerable extent, this is *planned* for by the insurgents and even necessary for their success. Thus to maintain legitimacy with the population at large the security forces must be seen to be subject to sanctions for behaving illegally.

3. As indicated above, external sanctions through the courts will probably be of no avail (even if they were, they would be so delayed as to be relatively meaningless in terms of the effect on the immediate situation). The possibility of an Indemnity Act would also tend to lessen any credibility which civil actions might have. Such 'controls' as reports (e.g. Compton, Bowen, Hola Camp) do nothing to prevent, nor to sanction, deviance in the immediate situation, however much they may contribute to future rule conformity. (It could be argued that they contribute little even in the long term, except that techniques become more sophisticated and the maltreatment less manifest.)

The other controls should not be dismissed but they all have limitations and no real direct sanctioning effect.

4. The need is for direct sanctions, and a self-enforcing system in so far as one can ever be designed.

With regard to specific deterrence against individuals there must be strong negative sanctions working from within the security forces, related to the individual's career prospects and his own self-image. He must, through training and guided exposure to the political facts of life, come to realize that his deviance from the rules laid down can become a boomerang and wash away whatever good work has been done. He must realize that he will be punished for deviance – in particular he will find impediments to promotion and other

career benefits if he deviates.

Footnotes Appendix I:

1. During the so-called Widgery Inquiry into the deaths of thirteen (later fourteen) men in Derry on Bloody Sunday, Lord Widgery, himself an ex-Army officer, wine and dine with 'brother officers' every night.
2. In April 1969 Samuel Devenney was savagely attacked in his own living-room by six members of the RUC. He died soon after from his injuries. Sir Arthur Young, sent over from London in 1969 to clean up the RUC, called over Scotland Yard detectives under Commander Drury. Despite the fact that witnesses named several of the policemen responsible, no disciplinary action ensued against anyone, let alone criminal charges. Police records and logs disappeared and Sir Arthur publicly referred to 'a conspiracy of silence' in the Derry police force.

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Appendix II

Proposed Draft for a UN Resolution on a Convention on Torture and the Treatment of Prisoners

suggested by Amnesty International

The General Assembly,

Gravely concerned at the constant resort to torture and inhuman or degrading treatment of persons imprisoned or detained, particularly during periods of armed conflict, internal strife or internal tension,

Noting that such violations of human rights continue despite the numerous dictates of international customary and convention law,

Recalling

(a) that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment,

(b) that the Genocide Convention of 1948 confirms that the causing of serious bodily harm to the members of a group with intent to destroy it in whole or in part is a crime under international law,

(c) that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966 provides that no one shall be subjected to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and that all persons deprived of their liberty shall be treated with humanity and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person,

(d) that the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination guarantees without distinction the right to security of person and protection by the State against violence or bodily harm

whether inflicted by government officials or by any individual group or institution,

Recalling further the prohibitions against torture and inhuman treatment contained in regional conventions on human rights and the numerous exhortations made by non-governmental organizations, the churches and religious bodies, the press and international public opinion for the elimination of violation of human rights and for the application and implementation of the existing rules of international law,

Noting that in the absence of specific provisions relating to the treatment of persons imprisoned or detained, such persons remain under the protection and governance of the principles of the law of nations as derived from the usages established among civilized nations, from the laws of humanity and from the dictates of the public conscience.

The General Assembly, therefore,

1. *Affirms* that the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners constitute authoritative guidelines pertaining to the treatment and rehabilitation of all prisoners under humane conditions and invites Members States to give urgent and positive consideration to the embodiment of the Rules and to the enforcement of their application in national legislation.

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish a Committee of Experts to prepare a draft Convention for adoption by the Member States of the United Nations outlawing torture and inhuman or degrading treatment of persons imprisoned or detained as constituting crimes under international law, to render compulsory under international law at the very least the observance of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and to provide an international implementation machinery.

3. Pending the incorporation of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners in an international Convention, urges that there should be introduced a regular machinery for the reporting to the Secretary-General by Member States on the application of the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules within their country.

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